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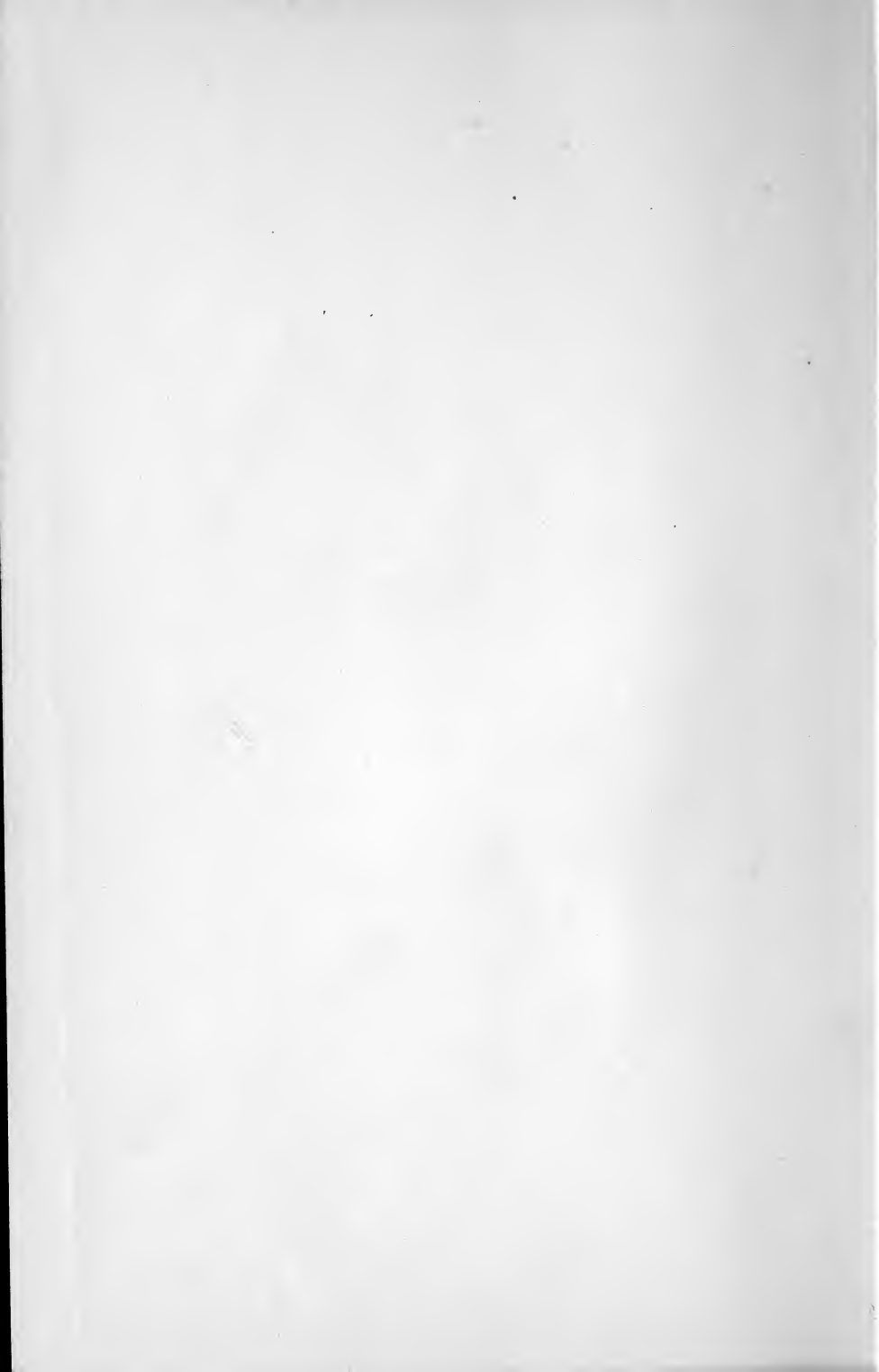
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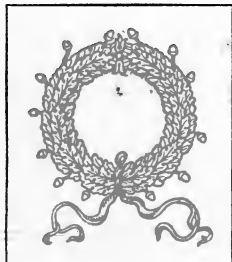


THE LIFE THAT COUNTS



THE
LIFE THAT COUNTS

BY
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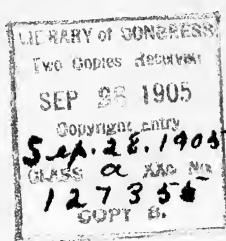
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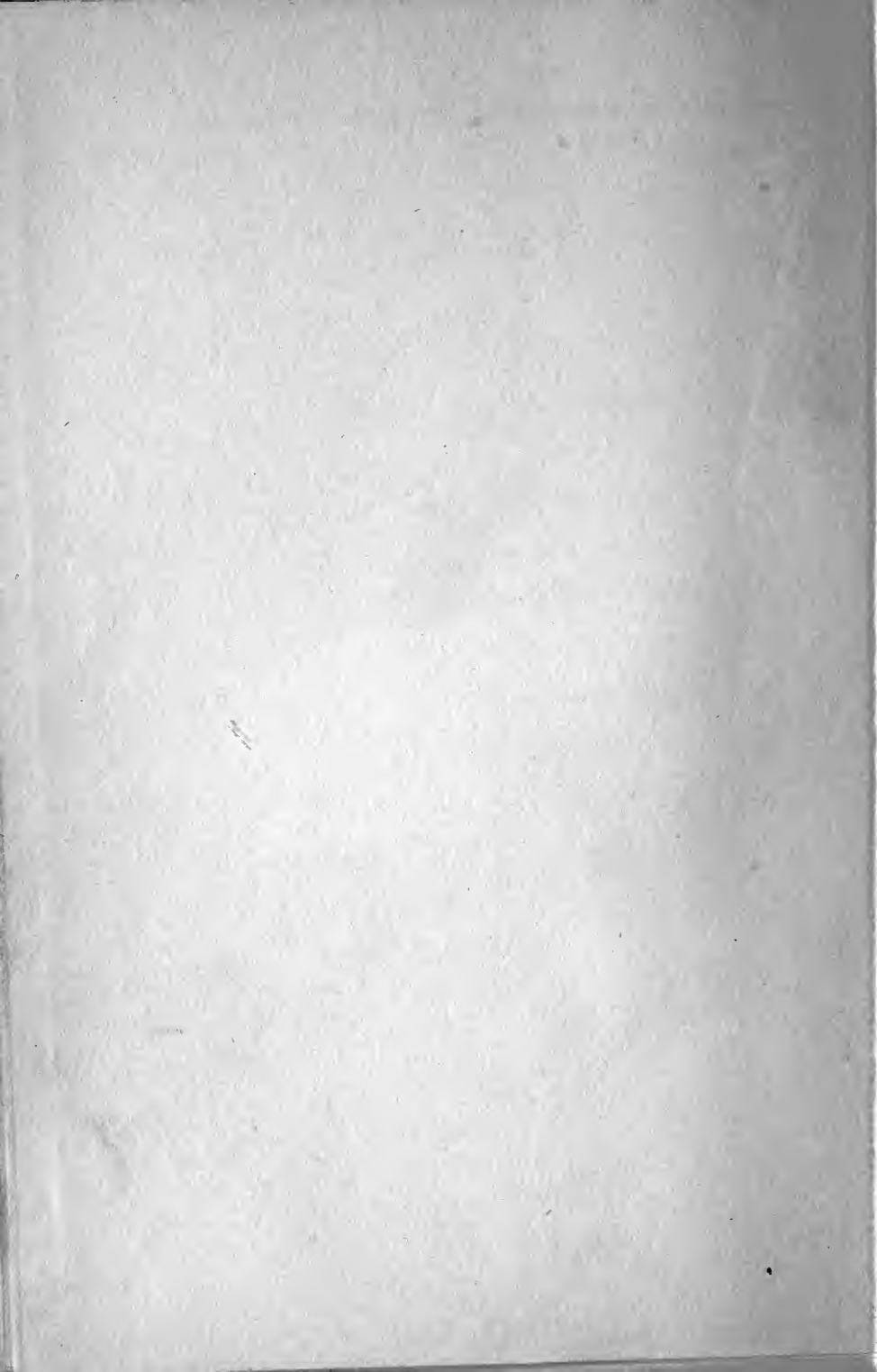
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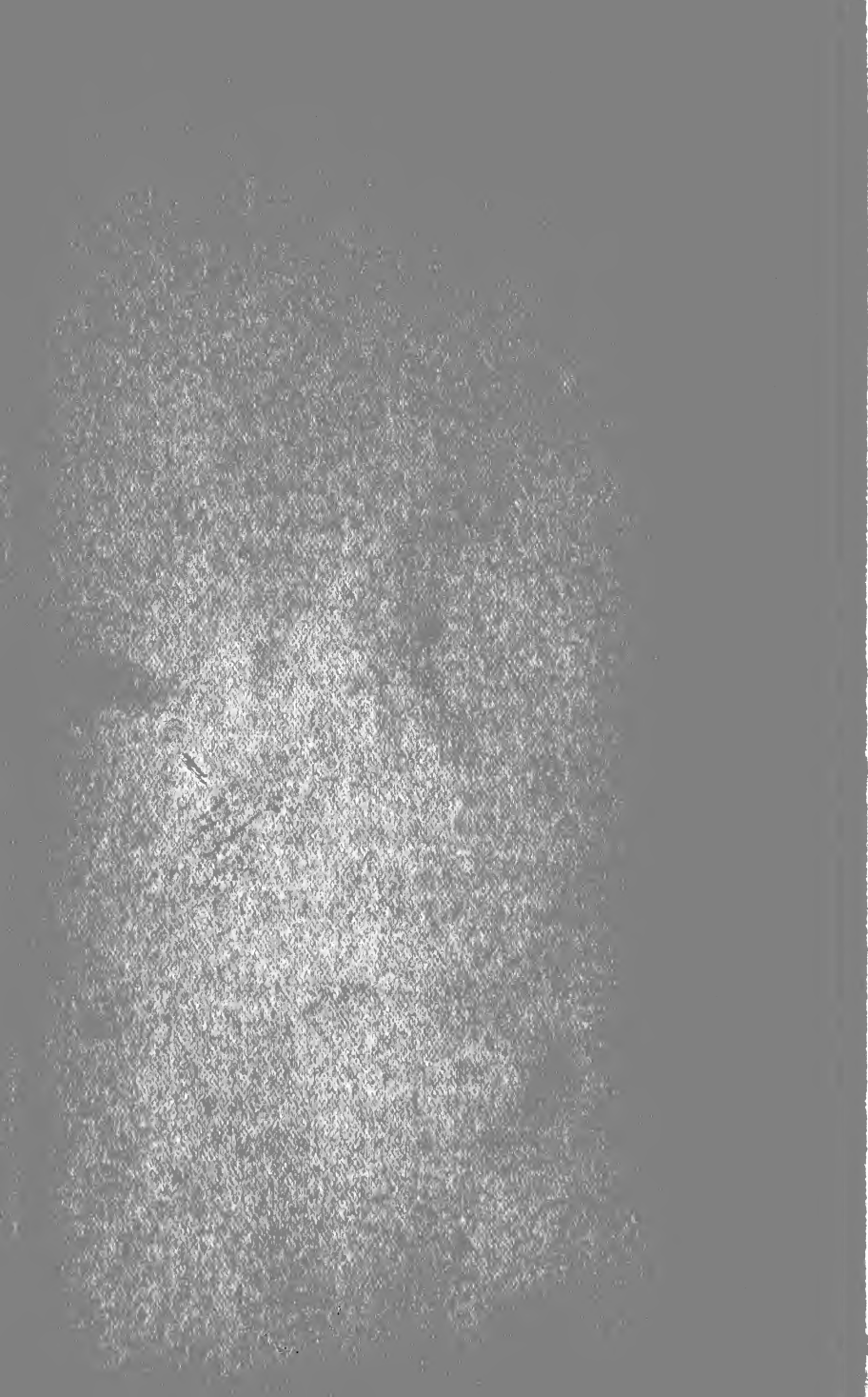
TO THE DEAR MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER
WHOSE LIFE OF GENTLENESS
AND
SELF-SACRIFICING SERVICE
HAS LAID ON ME A DEBT OF GRATITUDE
THAT CAN NEVER BE REPAYED
I DEDICATE
THIS LITTLE BOOK





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INTRODUCTION

WHAT counts is the good life; there is no other worth living. But whatever is good is good for something beyond itself; goodness in the abstract, goodness isolated and unrelated, does not exist. Goodness implies a goal, an object, a something on which to expend its energy. The good life is the life that reaches out, that fulfils itself, in ministration to other lives. The life that counts is the life that serves; the life that counts most is the life that serves most.

Service has many forms: to lead an army in freedom's behalf, to help shape beneficent laws, to open new fields of industry, to invent an implement that lessens toil, to add to the literature of a people, to preach righteousness by word or example, to inspire other lives to their best efforts, to mitigate the suffering or increase the happiness of men,—to do any of these things is to serve. But this by no means exhausts the list: to earn one's daily bread, to keep the home, to train up a child, to give a cup of cold water, to speak a kind word, to endure the reverses of fortune with a brave heart, to receive graciously the ministration of others when you are powerless to min-

ister to them,—these, too, are forms of service that sweeten life and benefit the world.

What service is greatest no man may know; for none can disentangle the threads of particular acts from the complicated texture of cause and effect and discover the far-reaching influence of little things. And it must also be borne in mind that oftentimes service consists not so much in the achievement of results as it does in an attitude of spirit. The poets, with their clear discernment, confirm us in this.

“’Tis not what man Does which exalts him, but what man
Would do,”

says Browning; and Milton in his blindness found comfort as he remembered,

“They also serve who only stand and wait.”

It follows, then, that every man, woman, or child, at all times and under all circumstances, may lead the life of service and therefore the life that counts. It is always a question of willingness.

This little book deals with some aspects of service, but chiefly with certain qualifications of the life that would serve. The truth it contains is not new. The good life, the life that serves other lives and counts for something in the world, has been essentially the same in all ages. The great principles of conduct and character were long ago set forth in proverb, parable,

and vision, and will never wear out. The truth in them is as old as the stars and as fresh as the morning light.

The chapters of the book—with the exception of the last, which describes, more particularly, the spirit that true service requires—derive their titles from the phraseology found in the Bible account of Ezekiel's Vision. A portion of the Vision's symbolism, though drawn upon so slightly here, is singularly applicable to the conditions of modern life.

It may be added, as explaining the style of expression here and there employed, that these nine chapters grew out of addresses given before young people with a view to stimulating their aspirations for useful living. If in their printed form they should prove helpful in any way to other lives, the book will have achieved its aim.

THE LIFE THAT COUNTS



*BURNING LAMPS AND
COALS OF FIRE*



HERE is a well worn but never-to-be-worn-out bit of wisdom which declares that whatsoever your hand finds to do you should do it with your might. Whole-heartedness, concentration, zeal, enthusiasm, energy,—these are magic words in the vocabulary of action. The man who is earnest will accomplish more with half the truth and only one talent than the man who is indifferent will accomplish with the whole truth and ten talents. “I would accept at any time,” says President Tucker of Dartmouth College, “the moral result of serious thinking upon the inferior subject in place of less serious thinking upon the greater subject.” We would rather hear a serious talk on butterflies than a flippant talk on religion. The laws of the universe put a great premium on whole-hearted devotion to the thing in hand. Dowieism, Mother-Eddyism, or any other *ism* that gets complete hold on a person, no matter how foolish it seems to other people, is not so much a spectacle to be laughed at as a phenomenon to be studied. It shows how far a little

truth will go when it has the backing of sincerity and unlimited zeal. With people who fail the trouble is, nine cases out of ten, that they make a "halfway covenant" with life; they divide the current of their energies; they set their face toward many directions, but steadfastly toward none; they have purposes enough, but not enough of a purpose; the whole of the man never goes into any act, whereas it ought to go into every act, whether the act be driving a nail or negotiating a treaty. Better than having a purpose is to let the purpose have you.

Consider, for example, the value of concentration if there is anything to be done. When the cruiser New York visited Germany at the opening of the Kiel Canal, Emperor William was one day entertained on board at dinner. On a sudden, according to a newspaper report, he asked the captain how long it would take to clear the ship for action after the order was given. "Three minutes," replied the captain. "Would you mind giving the order now?" rejoined the emperor. The order was given, the emperor took out his watch, and in less than the stated time the ship was transformed into the attitude of war. Such was the discipline, and such the arrangements throughout, that every man could be at his post and all the powers of the ship be centred on a common object at once under the guidance of a single will. That was concentration. It is what would tell in time of actual war. A power similar to that is needed in a person's life. It is amazing

how long it takes us sometimes to clear for action when we have nothing more important to do than write a letter; and after we have entered on a task, we are apt to waste our energy in side streams of effort, leaving the main current to move at a sluggish pace.

There are some acts which everybody recognizes as requiring the whole man to the very last fibre. When a surgeon performs a delicate operation, he has no business to think of his reputation, or of his sick wife, or of the epidemic that rages, or even of God and his own soul; he must think of the one thing he is doing and of nothing else, or the result will be disastrous. When a lion-tamer enters a cage of wild beasts, he leaves the world and all its interests outside; for the time being they do not exist; if he shows by a false step or the quiver of a muscle that his attention is elsewhere, or that he does not hold all his energy at a focus for instant use, he stands on dangerous ground. And it is much the same with any man in dealing with those other wild beasts we call circumstances in life; they get the better of us the moment we fear to look them in the eye.

But there can be no real concentration unless the man has an object and is dead in earnest about it. It is the earnest life after all that is needed most. If you should visit the power-house where they generate the electricity that lights the town, you would find there a switchboard on which two kinds of registers are set. One kind

measures what is called the amperage, or amount of electricity used, and the other measures the voltage, or intensity of it. The light that comes does not depend on the amperage; the amount of electricity may be large or small; the light depends on the voltage; that must be kept always at the lighting point; intensity and not quantity produces light. It is something like that with persons. Ability may be great or meagre; ability is only the amperage. But look at the earnestness of a man's life; that is the voltage and determines the light. A man may be able to do many things well and yet lack earnestness enough to do anything sufficiently well to shine. When Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world," he did not refer to any great amount of truth which they possessed—they were unlettered and ignorant men—but he referred to the earnest way in which the truth was held; they had left all for the kingdom of heaven's sake.

The earnestness with which a thing is said or done invariably carries weight. It is what we look for first. So long as a person is in earnest his influence is secure. This was the secret of much of Mr. Gladstone's success. It used to be said that when he was making a speech in the House of Commons you would think that the subject he talked about was the one chief interest of his life. And so it was for the time being. He threw himself into it in so earnest a way as to give point to the humorous remark that he could impro-

vise a lifelong conviction more effectively than any other human being. If you suspect that a person does not mean what he says, or takes no great interest in it, though you know he says the absolute truth, the influence of his words is gone. Earnestness is the life blood of all speech that is intended to convince or sway the minds of men. It carries a man forcefully forward to the object in view in spite of the intervening obstacles. "When the English language gets in my way," said Beecher, "it does n't stand any chance." "My verb has lost its nominative case," said Father Taylor, "but I'm bound for the kingdom." The lions and rocks that block the pathway of the half-hearted person become only phantoms and shadows as the earnest man approaches; he walks directly through them.

History, speaking from its vast area with a thousand voices, declares that the most potent force in every great movement is not the tramp of armies, nor the decrees of councils and cabinets, nor the splendor of thrones, nor the glitter of gold, nor the creations of intellect; the most potent force, the inevitable factor, is the moral earnestness behind some purpose in the heart of an individual man. That is the way in which Confucius has ruled China, the Buddha has ruled India, Socrates has ruled Greece, and Jesus Christ is to rule the world. Paul was known as a tent-maker, Peter as a fisherman, Columbus as a sailor, Luther as a monk, Cromwell as a farmer; and yet what largeness of purpose, what tre-

mendous earnestness, what mighty achievements, those names represent! The young woman whose career shines across French history as that of Joan of Arc was deemed a worker of miracles in her day. Without friends, or influence, or experience, only a peasant girl whose employment was the tending of sheep, she burst from her obscure home determined to do what all the men of France together had proved themselves incompetent to do. She rallied the discouraged armies of her country, led and inspired them on many a field, raised the siege of a great city, turned the tide of war, and restored the king to his throne. And for generations afterward, it is said, every time a regiment of soldiers passed through the little village of Domremy, where she was born, it used to halt and present arms in honor of her memory. How can we account for such a career? It is the same story—enthusiasm of faith, earnestness of purpose, indomitable will. Why the weak things of this world overcome the things that are mighty is no secret now.

The question is sometimes asked why the Church with its enormous wealth, its splendid traditions, and its great soul-inspiring truths does not impress itself more strongly on the world. It never had greater opportunities, or engaged in wider activities, or touched more of the interests of life; and yet its grasp on the multitude seems comparatively feeble. The reason is that spiritual power has not kept pace with material gain;

the amperage is large, but the voltage is low. Most of the people you meet nowadays are not so obviously aglow with moral earnestness as to remind you of burning lamps and coals of fire. The zeal of the Lord's house, or the zeal for truth and righteousness and goodness anywhere, in politics, or in literature, or in education, does not seize hold of men with anything like the vigor which may be described, in the Bible phrase, as a zeal that eats one up. We frequently think we need more truth, when what we really do need is more earnestness in using the truth we already have. The world needs a more liberal sprinkling of persons who are willing to be eaten up in the good cause. All progress depends on self-sacrifice; every step of the way has cost somebody something more precious than gold. The men and women who make the world better may differ in wealth, in education, in ability, in opportunity; but the one thing they possess in common is the earnest spirit; they take life and its duties in a serious way; their voltage is high.

The frivolous, purposeless lives of this world are like ships at the mercy of wind and tide. Hail one of them and ask, "Whither are you bound?" and the answer will be, "I don't know." "What cargo do you carry?" "Nothing." "Well, what are you doing out here on the ocean of life?" "Only drifting." "Ah! but you don't know what a sorry spectacle you make—only drifting when there is so much to be done." It is said that Carlyle, on one of his daily walks, met a young

man, and, falling into conversation with him, inquired about his purpose in life. "I haven't any particular purpose," came the reply. "Then get one," exclaimed the stern old man, striking his cane on the pavement,—*"get one quick."*

The president of an educational institution, in addressing a company of ministers in Boston on student life, divided college students into three kinds, and used for illustration an incident of his experience. During a visit to Japan, he stood on the wharf one day waiting for a steamer and happened to excite the curiosity of a laborer who was wheeling freight. The coolie, as he passed with his load, looked up and said in his pigeon English, "Come buy cargo?" meaning to inquire if the stranger had come out to Japan on commercial business. Receiving a reply in the negative, he framed a new question and said, as he passed the second time, "Come look an' see?" by which he meant to ask if the stranger was a tourist who had come to see the country. Not yet getting the information he wanted, he conjectured one more motive, and, the third time he trundled his barrow by, the question was, "'Spec' die soon?" that is, was the stranger there for his health?

This incident, used for describing the motives that lead young men to college, is capable of a still wider application; it describes three classes of persons who are with us everywhere and always. Some persons seem to have entered our planet for their health. Why they should have selected this particular world for such a purpose is be-

yond my comprehension. But here they are. Of course I do not mean that they are physically ill or weak. I mean that they announce themselves, by every sign and motion, as having arrived to be coddled and waited on; they are leaners, and they lean heavily; they contribute nothing to the world but their burdens for other people to carry; they insist that everything shall be made comfortable for their precious selves; that is what the world is for; whatever irks, or is unpleasant, or requires their exertion, must be put far away or kept out of sight; they will perhaps talk of flowers and stars and literature and art; they are fond of fine sentiments; they wish you to understand that they are very highly organized beings and that the parlor of life is none too good for them; they have feelings; what they say or do depends on the way they feel; and they have a good time, these parlor boarders; but when they retire from life they leave the world not one whit better than they found it for aught they have done.

I wonder if Walter Savage Landor knew what a selfish-looking creature he was painting in those four famous lines of his:

*"I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved, and, more than nature, art;
I warmed both hands within the fire of life:
It sinks and I am ready to depart."*

St. Paul never sat by the fire of life and warmed his hands while others did the work, not he! He was out gathering fuel. What these people need

who sit by the fire and warm themselves and feel is to get up and do some really useful thing. If necessary, let them also take a dose of Carlyle morning and evening for a month. Indeed, I am inclined to place over against the lines of Landor the vigorous phrases in which Professor William James has summed up what he considers the most important thing that Carlyle has said to us. He makes the philosopher of Chelsea say: "Hang your sensibilities! Stop your snivelling complaints and your equally snivelling raptures! Leave off your general emotional tomfoolery, and get to work like men!" This is the prescription for those who are here for their health.

Others, to all appearance, have come to view the country. They have merely dropped in upon us to see what we are like and what we are about. They do not call us away from our work as the health-seekers do; neither do they turn to and lend a hand. They look at life through an opera glass; it interests them as a spectacle, and as nothing more; whether the world goes well or ill is no concern of theirs; public spirit does not move them; they shun all entangling alliances with efforts to make the world better; for the word "obligation" you search their vocabulary in vain; no matter what moral question stirs men's blood, or what crisis may arise in the common weal, it leaves them calm and undisturbed; they take no lot or part in it; all they want is to "look an' see." For are they not tourists and sight-seers? They came as foreigners, and foreigners

they remain, with that far-awayness of attitude and manner which you might expect in a visitor from the moon; in a word, they prefer to be spectators, as at some great drama, and to sit in the gallery, and become critics, and of course pessimists, and assure one another that life is not worth living; in which assurance they are right, if what they mean is a life like theirs.

But there are still others. Let us thank Heaven that there are others—a third class—who are willing to shoulder responsibilities and bear burdens. They have come for business; they find life, not a spectacle, but an opportunity; they mingle with their fellow men and are a part of what they see; it makes a difference to them how the world is going; they want it to go right; when there is anything to be done, they know that they are the ones to do it; they are always ready, and when they go they go straight forward. These are the men and women who want their lives to count for something; their idea is not to get what they can out of the world,—such a thought never enters their mind,—but to put what they can into the world; they are “soldiers of conscience”; they are the world’s helpers and hope-bringers, burning lamps and coals of fire.

It is in this class that such heroic men as St. Paul, St. Francis, Savonarola, and Martin Luther belong; such patriots as Samuel Adams, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt; such preachers as Chrysostom, Ambrose, John Wesley, Henry Ward Beecher,

and Phillips Brooks; such poets as Dante, Milton, Alfred Tennyson, and John G. Whittier; such teachers as Thomas Arnold, Mark Hopkins, Samuel C. Armstrong, and Mary Lyon; such ministrants of humanity as Florence Nightingale, Clara Barton, and Frances E. Willard,—these and many more in all departments of life; also the great multitude who are unknown to fame, but whose names are written in the book of those who love and serve mankind. All these represent widely different personalities, abilities, and achievements, but one common fellowship of earnest living.

We were born with certain capacities and opportunities; they may be great or small; we cannot greatly change them; they constitute the limits within which our work must be done; but the interest we take, the zeal we show, the use we make of those powers,—all this is left in our own hands.

Suppose we take another look at the switchboard. The illustration is homely, but true. We find there a small lever controlled by a small wheel. The lever has no power to increase or diminish the amount of electricity in the board; but if we look at the register which measures the intensity, we shall see that the turning of the lever in one direction or the other increases or diminishes the intensity of the light, making the lamp burn bright or low. What that small lever is to the switchboard, a person's will power is to his life. Some Power other than ourselves sup-

plies the amperage of life; we must take care of the voltage. The lamp of the humblest soul on earth, though the lamp be small and unseen of the world at large, is seen of heaven and may burn with as much intensity as that of any prophet or apostle of old.

The names of the men and women enumerated above are incentives toward the right kind of life in other people. The power of personality, for moulding character and inspiring to worthy deeds, is the mightiest power on earth. The argument of a good example is an argument for which there is no answer. The list of such lives might be indefinitely extended if space allowed. But there is one name that we can by no means afford to omit. It stands for a complete and wonderfully consistent life,—a life that will be cited more and more in our schools and colleges, as Professor Jowett, the famous Greek scholar of Oxford University once remarked, because of its educational power. Open the book of that life and read. The very first sentence that strikes your eye—the first recorded utterance of that life—is this: “Know ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Open it farther on in the period of manhood, and what do you see? “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” Turn over a leaf and read again: “I do always those things that please Him.” Look on the last page and see if it holds out to the end. What do you find? “I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.”

Here then is a life without blot or blank. From beginning to end it is filled with noble things. And the most wonderful thing about it is that it shows what possibilities exist in you and in me.



THE FACE OF A MAN



T is an interesting question how far we are responsible for our faces. No man by taking thought can increase the length of his nose or the height of his forehead; neither can he change the color of his eyes or the form of his chin. These features we receive from our parents, thankfully or regretfully, and it behooves us to make the best of them.

On the other hand, what we choose to eat and drink exerts a modifying influence on the face. We are conscious, too, of exercising a direct control over the delicate muscles of the facial machinery. But the strongest influence is the thoughts and feelings we entertain; these have a way at times of leaping into the face and proclaiming themselves to all the world as from a housetop; more commonly, however, they stray thither without our knowing it, and this tendency becomes a fixed habit; they come and go and leave their tracks behind them; the same thought or feeling takes the same path each time, wearing it into greater and greater distinctness, till the observing world begins to learn what sort of travelers have passed that way; and our faces,

thus lined and written upon, become as epistles known and read of all men.

The responsibility for our faces, therefore, seems to be divided between our ancestors and ourselves; but, as a practical matter, the world drops ancestry out of the account and holds every man responsible for his own face, and for the whole of his face, however he came by it. If we want to know anything about a man, and there are no other means available, we study his face. When we say, "I like that face," or, "I don't like that face," we mean the character of the man who wears the face.

Evidently the Church had something of this sort in mind when, long ago, it took the four faces described by the prophet and distributed them among the four Evangelists—giving Matthew the face of a man, Mark the face of a lion, Luke the face of an ox, and John the face of an eagle—according to a supposed resemblance between the particular Gospel and the thing symbolized by the face; and, for our present purpose, it will be easy to regard these faces as symbols of four great traits of character which every person requires who would serve his fellow men.

What, then, does the face of a man represent? If you introduce a little hydrogen gas under the bell-jar of an air-pump, it will at first rise to the top and then spread gradually outward and downward through all the air which the jar contains. If the gas be oxygen and you introduce it from above, it will sink to the bottom, and in a simi-

lar way spread outward and upward. Why the gas that is lighter than air should send any of itself downward, or why the other gas that is heavier than air should send any of itself upward, nobody really knows. But such is the fact. Either gas seems compelled, by some internal power, to expand in all directions till it has distributed its infinitesimal particles impartially throughout the entire enclosure, and the fact would be the same if the bell-jar were as big as St. Peter's dome. This illustrates what a true humanity is like: it reaches downward to those below us in rank or ability or opportunity, and upward to those above us, and outward to those around us, and the principle of expansion in it we call sympathy. I mean that our humanity, if it is normal and the essential thing has not been squeezed out of it by selfish living, will transcend the bounds of kinship, of friendship, of patriotism, even of race, till one is able to say, "Nothing which concerns a human being is foreign to me."

What a difference it would make in the relations between capital and labor, between rich and poor, between nation and nation, between race and race, if only it were remembered what the face of a man represents! It represents brotherhood; it represents sympathy, that great human quality which can bind men together and make brotherhood a recognized fact instead of an empty name. It is of this sympathy I wish to speak. Human sympathy is a priceless possession in anybody's life; for the highest service as well as for the high-

est culture it is indispensable; it is an element in all leadership; unless one feels with others, he can never understand them, or exert much influence over their lives. Not what we possess in separateness and isolation, but what we possess in common or are able and willing to share, gives us power and usefulness among men. The greatest benefactors of the race have been men of great sympathies; with the spirit of caste or exclusiveness they have had no lot or part; there is not a snob or a Pharisee among them all. If there was one quality more than another which won for Abraham Lincoln the confidence of men and enabled him to carry his country through a great crisis, it was his sympathy as revealed in charity for all and malice toward none. You may do almost anything with people who believe you wish them well.

We are too much occupied in thinking simply of our own affairs; we do not concern ourselves enough with the fact that others have their lives to live too. The worst of it is, not that we lead narrow lives, but that we are well satisfied to do so. Watch the people rushing for a crowded car: why so much haste? Are they afraid they will not arrive in time to do some one a service? Oh, no, they are not worrying about that; they want to make sure of a seat; their only fear is lest some one else may get it and get the comfort of it rather than themselves. Most people treat life as a crowded car and rush for the best places in the same way. Of course there is no dignity in this;

the common name of it is selfishness; and yet we seldom condemn it, so content we are not to prefer one another in honor.

We have, each one of us, our own little world of experience. Many people imagine this to be all the world there is; they make it their standard of judgment; they expect other people to know as they know, to think as they think, to do as they do, considering any departure from their particular ways and opinions as a subject for ridicule or remark. Of course there is no dignity in this, either; the common name is provincialism; those afflicted with it do not know, and they do not know that they do not know.

Now the moment we cross the boundary line from our own little world into the little world of some other person and see how things look to him, the perspective begins to change; we modify some of our opinions; we find, perhaps, that in the same situation we should think and act as he does. The more of these little worlds we visit, that is to say, the larger our experience becomes, the better we learn that there is one great world encompassing them all. It is the supreme object of education to get us out of our narrowness and make us citizens of this larger world.

But sympathy has its enemies. Suppose some one should tell you that a couple of armed sentinels were patrolling before the house in which you live with the avowed purpose of never letting you set foot out of doors again, you would probably be disturbed, if you thought he meant it;

possibly you might pluck up courage enough to look out of the window and then reply, "I don't see any one; I think you must be mistaken." But suppose, instead of saying "the house in which you live," he should say "your own little world;" and suppose he should give the armed sentinels their rightful names, calling one of them the Habit of Talking Overmuch about One's Self and the other the Habit of Talking Unkindly about One's Neighbor, you would not feel nearly so frightened, though you would have vastly more cause for it. Both these well known members of the Habit family make it their business to destroy human sympathy; whenever they present themselves before any one's little world, they have come with the intention of keeping him shut up there forever; they mean that, so far as they can prevent it, he shall never discover the good and true and beautiful things in the larger world outside. And the more he sees no harm in their presence, the more he becomes their prisoner.

A good listener is much rarer to find than a good talker. The trouble with the world is not that it has not had talking enough, but that it has not had listening enough. You will occasionally see two persons engaged in conversation—that at least is what they call it—when each talks only of what specially concerns himself and pays no attention to what the other is saying, except by a quick yes or no, or nod of the head. Some one has wittily defined a bore as a person who talks of himself when you want to talk of yourself.

And yet as bad as this habit is, the other is worse. Better to talk in a dull way about one's self than to talk unkindly about one's neighbors. A bore may be less interesting than a gossip, but he is safer to associate with in this world and surer of consideration in the day of judgment. The critical spirit and the helpful spirit have nothing in common. When one of them comes in the other goes out. They avoid each other's company, like two ambassadors whose governments are at war. When we take the conduct and motives of people into our laboratory for dissection and classification, it is well to take along at the same time some words of Oliver Cromwell. "I beseech you," he said, "by the mercies of the Lord to believe in the possibility of your being mistaken." There are also four lines of Robert Louis Stevenson that ought to be inscribed on the memory of every man, so alive they are with warm human sympathy and sound commonsense. The lines are these:

*"There is so much bad in the best of us,
And so much good in the worst of us,
That it hardly behooves any of us
To talk about the rest of us."*

Maxims that bear on the question of sympathy and service are easily found. I will offer but three.

First: Do not isolate yourself from other people. Physical isolation breeds mental and spiritual isolation. Remember, but do not copy after,

the parish priest in the poem, who climbed up
"in a high church steeple to be nearer God."

*"And in sermon script
He daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven;
And he dropped it down
On the people's heads
Two times one day in seven.*

*"In his age God said,
'Come down and die.'
And he cried out from the steeple,
'Where art thou, Lord?'
And the Lord replied,
'Down here among my people.'"*

To be alone is often necessary for recuperation and preparation, but also, if one wants to make his work effective with people he must go where people are. Henry Ward Beecher's power was largely due to the fact that he mingled with men. The power of usefulness decreases inversely as the square of the distance because sympathy decreases. The message you send is far less effective than the message you carry. The Divine Life did not send truth into the world; the Divine Life brought truth into the world. Personal contact is what counts; it means sympathy. Your life is your message, and it is forever preaching itself to other lives. The time has gone by when it was complimentary to compare a great man to a lonely star or a mountain peak; the comparison needed now is that of the broad warm prairie which not only receives the sunshine of heaven, but also

gives it back again in fruit and friendliness to all who come.

Take pains, then, to consider other people's lives; enlarge your acquaintance; beware of giving yourself wholly to one friend, or two friends, or three; it hurts you and it hurts your friend; mingle with people outside your particular "set." But never delude yourself with the idea that they need you any more than you need them; no matter what your acquirements, you will rarely find a person who is not your superior in some respect and at whose feet you cannot sit and learn. The blacksmith, in so far as he can shoe a horse and you cannot, is your superior; and so are the butcher and the baker and the candlestick maker; and so is any one who bears the ills of life with a braver heart. You will be surprised, too, in discovering that what you have in common with others is vastly more than what you have as an individual possession; you are not a unique person; you are quite like other people. What John saw in his splendid vision of the ideal society was not little groups of two or three, here and there, in corners by themselves; what impressed him was the great multitude united by a common interest and sympathy; there are no cliques in heaven.

Second: Do something for somebody. Not only mingle with people, but lend a hand wherever you can. The case is not fully stated when we say that what we do depends on what we think. It is equally true that what we think depends on

what we do. A strange action and reaction exist between thought and deed. We cannot tell why it is so; but it seems to be a great psychological law that thought should influence deed, and that deed should influence thought.

Perhaps the easiest way of coming into sympathy with a person is to begin by doing him a service. If you wrong a person, you are likely to think ill of him in consequence; if you do him a kindness, you are likely to think well of him in consequence and to do him another kindness. Benjamin Franklin once put this trait of human nature to a practical use. He wanted to win over an influential man whose opposition he feared. What do you suppose he did? He went to him and asked the loan of a certain book which he named. Now Franklin did not want the book any more than he wanted the moon; what he was after was to get the man to do him a favor for the sake of the influence of the deed on the attitude of the man's mind. It worked like a charm.

Whatever we do has a tendency to arouse our interest. The old excuse, "I'm not interested," is no longer valid; it only pushes the matter back on the question, "But why aren't you interested?" We know now that the interest we take in things or in persons is the result of our own choosing; we may become interested in what or in whom we will. There is a city which may be called the City of Our Interests; it is surrounded by a strong and high wall, in which there are two gates,—the Gate of Thinking and the Gate

of Doing,—and people are forever entering in through the one or the other. Look at a thing long enough, turn it over in your mind, become familiar with it, and, before you are aware, you have entered into the City through the Gate of Thinking. But if that seems difficult, and you make your approach from the other side, the Gate of Doing stands always open; you can always do what you know you ought to do. Do something for people and you will become interested in people; do your duty and you will become interested in your duty; and, lo, you have entered into the City through the Gate of Doing. When you are within the City, through whichever gate you enter, you will find yourself ready both to think and to do. Do, therefore, what you believe you ought, even if you feel no interest in it; you will feel an interest by and by. He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine.

Third: As to any service which you render a fellow being, do not regard it in the light of a favor, but rather in the light of a debt; it is not something you give, but something you owe. The greatest of the apostles declared himself a debtor to all men.

This is an important distinction; it determines the difference between the patronizing spirit, which is death to all sympathy, and the spirit of brotherly regard, which alone is the sympathy we want. There is no place in the world for the I-am-better-than-you sort of feeling. That is the deadliest of all the poisons that eat into and destroy

the human soul. The man who patronizes another—who reaches some favor or help to him on the end of a long pole—fails to recognize our common humanity; he does not wear the face of a man.

No, you are a debtor. Look at the things which you are pleased to call your own—your life, your home, your friends, your education, your money, your power to work—and consider how you came by them; they are the result of forces that were at work in the world before you arrived; they are loaned you, every one of them; your part in the affair—surely, not a burdensome part—has been to put forth your hand and receive; the utmost that even a self-made man has ever done to make himself what he is has been to take and use the opportunities which he found prepared and set before him; freely ye have received. And these things were sent you as tools are sent to a workman, not to do as you please with, but to use as the Great Employer desires; they were sent you, for the most part, by the hands of your fellow men, whose right it is to receive what you have to offer in return; so far as your duty is concerned, your fellow men are the representatives of God.

Humanity has done vastly more for every individual than the individual has done, or will ever be able to do, for humanity; no man can repay the debt though he should live a thousand years. But there is one thing a man can do, and if there is any self-respect or right feeling in his heart he

will do, and that is, he will look on it as a debt. He will cast away the old worn-out motto, which has strewn the earth with battlefields and filled its homes with sorrow, the motto, namely, "My rights your duties;" and he will substitute, by that reversal which the spirit of Christ makes possible, the better and nobler motto, which replaces war with arbitration among states, and changes alienation into brotherhood among individuals, —the motto, namely, "Your rights my duties."

These three maxims, then, — Mingle with people, Do something for others, Keep a lively sense of gratitude in your heart, —are worthy of consideration for their sympathy-compelling power. And there is one word more. Sympathy may be dangerous as well as helpful. That depends on the way it is exercised. If your friend has quarreled with another person, or entertains a grievance of any kind, and comes to you for sympathy, the temptation is very great to take his point of view without considering whether he may not himself have been at fault. This is a false loyalty. If the fault was his and you overlook it or minimize it, your sympathy is dangerous; it only confirms him in his error and leaves him in a worse condition than he was in before. Blind partisan sympathy encourages division and destroys confidence; it is the most harmful thing you can offer a friend.

If, on the other hand, you analyze the case and point out to your friend wherein he was wrong as well as right, thus showing that you sympa-

thize, not with his worse, but with his better self, you have done what is perhaps the greatest service that one human being can do for another; you have set him to thinking and helped him toward that self-knowledge where all progress in character begins.

Emerson, in referring to the wrong kind of sympathy,—“base sympathy,” he calls it,—says: “We come to those who weep foolishly, and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks.”

Jesus Christ, the greatest moral teacher and the most sympathetic friend the world has ever seen, never gave sympathy pure and simple to any person; it was always the sympathy with righteousness in it, and therefore it helped lift the person to a higher plane. He could eat with publicans and sinners without for one moment allowing them to feel that he condoned their wrong-doing; he sympathized with such tendencies as he found in them towards a better way of life. It is the part of wisdom in a man to follow an example like that—to make his alliances with the good, and never with the evil, that he finds in other men.

Human sympathy is a mighty power. It constitutes the solvent for most of our troubles. The light that will banish the darkness from the social and industrial life of to-day must be a light that will shine there in the face of a man.



THE FACE OF A LION

I



ONE of the days that stand out with most prominence in my memory is the day when I looked for the first time on Lucerne and the Swiss mountains. The town lay along the edge of the lake; the waters of the lake were as smooth and transparent as glass, and where they poured through the river Reuss, their natural outlet, they suggested a river of beryl or emerald. And then the great silent friendly mountains, like guardians, stood all about,—Righi in the distance, and close at hand the overpowering majesty of Pilatus with his belt of mist. The air breathed of security and peace. We had come up from Paris on the night train—from the glare of electric lights, from the noisy boulevards and the tumultuous life of that restless city—and the contrast was very great; it almost seemed as if we had left the world behind us, and with the morning light were being ushered into the presence chamber of all the Alpine range or even of Nature herself; everything was so simple, so beautiful, and on so grand a scale.

But closely connected with this environment

of nature was something of even greater interest. In a spot retired from the town, there rises a perpendicular cliff of gray rock; you catch glimpses of its face through the intervening trees as you approach; a grotto, cut into the cliff about a third of the way up, contains the colossal figure of a lion; the poor beast, lying on his side, with the broken shaft of a javelin through his body and the agony of death in his face, was chiseled from the living rock; so much he seems a part of his surroundings that all the sculptor had to do, you might imagine, was to draw aside a curtain and show you a lion which had been dying there from the foundation of the world.

And in a sense this is true. Even the most unread and indifferent visitor experiences a feeling akin to awe in that quiet place, and vaguely believes that what he looks on is more than the figure of a lion; that there is a meaning back of it all which connects the visible symbol with something as great and enduring as the everlasting hills. The two shields—one of them marked with the cross and the other with the fleur-de-lis—remind you of the story. Your thought goes back to the great city on the banks of the Seine as it appeared that summer day in 1792. All Paris is in uproar; its frenzied thousands, howling like demons, are marching toward the palace of the king; they thirst for his blood. The king cannot trust the army; he must look for safety to the single regiment of Swiss soldiers which constitutes his palace guard; his enemies have

attempted to bribe even them, but they will not be bribed; everything that threats can do has been done, but they will not be frightened; come what will, they take their orders from the king alone; he escapes from the palace, but they still remain to hold the mob in check; presently an order comes from the king to cease firing, and they obey, though knowing well the consequence.

The story is too long and too terrible to be related here; the men of the Swiss Guard were faithful; unable to defend themselves any longer, because of that ill-advised order of the king, they were overwhelmed by the mob and laid down their lives, every man at his post. That was in tumultuous Paris, and here in far-away Switzerland, among the steadfast mountains, beside the lake shaped like the cross of sacrifice, and under the open sky, which things had "nourished their fresh young spirits," as Mr. Ruskin says, we find their memorial; it looks like the apotheosis of failure, but in reality means the glorification of fidelity and courage. The yellow leaf, the symbol of all that is transient and perishable, falls from the trees on the brow of the precipice into the pool at its foot; but the sculptor's work symbolizes great qualities that are permanent and eternal in the character of God and heroic men. In the impressive stillness of the place your interest passes from nature to this work of art, and from that to the moral life.

The theme of this chapter is the face of a lion as symbolizing courage. The lion, whether in

legend or in literature or in heraldry, has always stood for that cardinal virtue. He roams through the pages of Homer supplying the poet with many a simile for describing the heroes of the Trojan War. He remains the symbolical representative of the greatest empire of modern times. In these cases he is portrayed as strong and vigorous and full of aggressive power. Were we looking on such a lion as that—one, for example, in the act of advancing upon his prey, his eyes afire with concentrated energy and the muscles of his body like springs of steel ready to be released—he would be recognized at once as a fitting symbol of courage. But in regard to a lion whose power is gone and whose face wears the aspect of pain, there may be room for doubt and hesitation. If the question arises in any one's mind, as probably it does, whether courage has any special relation to death or pain, the reply must be that most assuredly it has. Courage in every instance must take pain into the account, either pain actual or pain potential. Pain, if not seen, is always in the background. The advantage, for our present purpose, in choosing the Lion of Lucerne, is the fact that the pain has advanced into the foreground where we can easily see it.

What, then, is courage which we need so much, but possess so little? Courage is the willingness to endure pain for the sake of some end in view. You lie in bed one of these winter mornings thinking how you will shiver with the cold when you first rise; you hesitate and wait because you

do not like to shiver; it is an unpleasant sensation; it is pain; but presently you consider the advantages of being up and about your work, you decide to endure the temporary discomfort or pain of shivering in order to reach those advantages, and so you make the plunge. That is courage; nothing very heroic, to be sure, but still courage as far as it goes. A policeman rushes into a burning house to rescue a child; he knows the smoke may smother him, or the exit may be cut off, or the floor may give way; nevertheless, he is ready to take all risks with the pain involved for the sake of his purpose. That too is courage. Eliminate the pain, or the possibility of pain, connected with an act and you eliminate the courage. The smitten lion represents courage in the highest degree, for the pain in his face is the pain of death; it means sacrifice to the uttermost. Greater courage, as well as greater love, has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for what he holds dear. The men of Switzerland held loyalty dearer than life.

It is important to understand not only the nature but also the value of courage. Anything which has the universal approval of mankind is worth considering with care. That is true of courage; it is the most widely appreciated virtue in the whole catalogue of virtues; it elicits admiration from the savage and the civilized man alike; even when directed to wrong ends it sheds a sort of glory along its path: the Captain Kidds, the Dick Turpins, the Jesse Jameses, and all the

dare-devils of frontier life, though commonplace enough in their sins, are interesting for one thing—their courage. Courage was one of the four great virtues revered by the ancient world. The name of coward has always been the most opprobrious name you can apply to any person, and the name of hero the most honorable. The German Emperor decorates, with impartial hand, the Russian General Stoessel for defending Port Arthur and the Japanese General Nogi for capturing it, because of the undaunted courage displayed in either case.

There are reasons for all this. One is, that the other virtues, and in fact about all the powers we possess, require the backing of courage to make them effective. Loyalty, honesty, sympathy, convictions of right, high ideals, knowledge, skill,—these are worth no more than old lumber in a person's life unless he has courage enough to put them to use. We fail oftener than anywhere else at the point of courage. Many a man sees what he ought to do, but he lacks the will power, the willingness to endure the necessary discomfort, that is to say, he lacks the courage, required for doing what he sees he ought. Some lives seem so well equipped and yet so fruitless of results that they remind one of a beautiful armory in which you find a splendid array of weapons, but no hand to wield them.

Another reason for the high place of courage in the world's regard is the fact that no progress would be possible without it. We all desire cer-

tain things which we do not possess; they are set before us like so many goals; one person desires the power to play some musical instrument; another, the mastery of a language; another, a college education. Objects of desire loom up very attractively at times. How shall we attain to them? There is but one way: between ourselves and every goal, be it a near goal or a far goal, obstacles intervene and possibly dangers; the road is a road of difficulty, requiring labor and patience and self-denial from all who travel upon it. There shines the goal, here runs the road: are you willing to endure the privations of the journey for the sake of the prize? It is always a question of courage. The Pilgrim's Progress is a great book of courage because it deals with the journey.

Courage would be in somewhat less demand if all we had to do were to walk in the footsteps of others. But there is no such beaten path; your experience must be different from that of every other person in the world; every life must, in some respects, find its own path, feeling its way along from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Progress would be impossible unless we were willing to do some things we have never done before—oftentimes, things which nobody has ever done before. This requires courage of the same order as the courage of discoverers and pioneers.

The third reason for giving courage its high place is that this world is organized and fitted up exclusively for people of courage. Others do seem to stray in among us, but they have come

to the wrong planet and the world gives them the cold shoulder. Courage is needed at every point. Nobody knows when he may be called upon to cope with a burglar, or to stop a runaway horse, or to rescue a drowning child, to say nothing of such a minor occurrence as visiting the dentist or facing a strange dog. And then the occasions for courage increase instead of diminish as time goes on. There are more things to make us afraid now, if we choose to let them, than ever before. The ancients knew nothing of railway accidents, dangerous explosives, live wires, or the germ theory of disease. Many a locomotive engineer, or captain of an ocean liner, or superintendent of a powder mill, or hospital nurse, faces quite as perilous situations as ever confronted the men whom Plutarch extols for their courage. Every advance in civilization, though it drops off some old terror, adds one or two new ones in its place. The plan seems to be to keep the fearful person always uneasy, and the person of courage always on his mettle.

Even the most quiet and guarded life is at no moment absolutely safe. The lamp we study by may explode; the ceiling may drop on our heads; we may slip and break an arm or burst a blood vessel; we may choke to death with a grapestone, as Anacreon is said to have done; or if we escape all these things, there is always the innumerable and invisible army of microbes flying around in the air to attack us and end our lives in some other inglorious way.

It is simply dangerous to live in a world of this kind. Life is a running of the gauntlet *per tela per hostes*, and would be utterly intolerable without courage. The people who are always smelling for sewer gas, or hunting for germs, or analyzing every ache, or providing against every contingency—like the English nobleman who carried a mousetrap when he traveled lest he should be troubled with mice in his room—these people are not the ones who do the serious work of the world.

The object of life is not to find a pleasant road, but to reach a worthy goal, whatever the road. The one safe way is to do your work, that is, to do your duty, giving little thought to discomforts and dangers. Select the right goal, keep your eyes on that goal, then go always straight forward; "if you meet the devil, cut him in two and go between the pieces."

It should never be forgotten that a perpetual alliance exists between this universe and every courageous heart. There are resources outside ourselves that respond to our call. The man of one talent and large courage is a far greater power than the man of ten talents and small courage. You may match courage against opportunity nine times out of ten and be perfectly secure.

When a lobster loses a claw, it is said that Nature supplies him with another. When a man loses a foot, or a hand, or an eye, it is gone forever. But Nature is not less kind; she knows that she has already supplied man with the power to

exercise courage. It is amazing what deficiencies this will take care of. If one were asked to discover and accurately describe the habits of the honey-bee without the use of his eyes, the task might well seem impossible. But that is what the German Huber did more than a hundred years ago; blind himself, he used the sight of others, telling them what to look for and questioning them of what they saw; he gathered his material in this slow and laborious manner, and then wrote a book which has remained the chief authority on the subject to this day. The historians Prescott and Parkman were blind, or nearly so; Milton was blind; one of the most distinguished postmasters-general of Great Britain was blind; Beethoven was deaf. One would not expect great results from men who seem deprived of the very faculties needed for achieving them. But these were men who refused to be discouraged; they were willing to endure the inconvenience, and put into their work the extra labor and patience required. The world is full of examples, great and small.

The real prizes of life are not carelessly bestowed. Every man who would achieve anything is put to the test; before he gets far on the road, he is challenged by some circumstance that stands there like a sentinel: "Who goes there?" Every man who does achieve anything answers the challenge by resolutely pushing on. The man of little courage will turn back.

Caution is a virtue, but not over-caution;

under some circumstances apparent recklessness becomes a virtue too. It now and then happens that the way to a great opportunity lies through the gateway of a single chance, and no one ever passes that gateway unless he be endowed with courage. The coward sits around waiting for something to turn up; whereas the man of courage—for the man of courage is always a man of action—begins to deal with what has already turned up, no matter how poor and unpromising it is. The essence of courage, it has been said, is to stake one's life on a possibility.

The person who waits until everything is just to his mind, before beginning a piece of work, will never begin. This was the mistake of one of the most prominent generals of the Civil War. He was given a splendid army, and the country looked for splendid results. But the army did not move. The general wanted more men and more guns and more camp equipment first. These were cheerfully supplied. And still the army did not move. The general discovered other obstacles and conjured up bugaboos and assigned reasons why the condition of the army involved too many risks for an advance upon the enemy yet. He seemed to forget that war is "risky" at best, just as some people forget that life is risky. So the valuable weeks went by, and nothing was accomplished till the army was taken from him and given to a more daring commander.

Contrast this with an incident of the Revolutionary War—the first fight between the Amer-

icans and the British on the water. A handful of untrained farmers with only the implements of the farm—axes, scythes, pitchforks, and a few old muskets—embarked on a sloop at the wharf of a small town in Maine intending to sail out into the bay and capture a vessel of the British navy that was armed with cannon. Think of it! But they accomplished their purpose, and, in commemoration thereof, the name of the town they honored is borne around the world to-day by one of the vessels of our modern navy—the *Machias*.

It is well to remember how much we owe, for the progress and well-being of the world, to men who have staked everything on a possibility, who have burned their bridges behind them, who have been leaders of a forlorn hope. The discovery of America was due to a man of this type. For strength, long-drawn-out steadfastness, unreserved devotion to an idea, in the face of tremendous odds, the courage of Christopher Columbus wears the aspect of sublimity; it is to the courage of other men what the Amazon is to other rivers, or Niagara Falls to other cataracts. The Pilgrim Fathers led a forlorn hope when they cast in their lot with the sea and the wilderness and the wolves and the Indians. Washington led a forlorn hope when he drew his sword under the Old Elm at Cambridge and beheld the ill-clad, ill-trained, almost weaponless men, with whom he was to stand against the disciplined armies of England. Opportunity from Co-

lumbus, freedom from the Pilgrim Fathers, security from Washington—these greatest of human blessings are each the result of a courage sufficient to transform a forlorn hope into a glorious achievement.

These great examples have been mentioned in order to bring into view the possibilities of courage which exist in the human spirit. When we think of the men and women who have braved the perils of the sea, of the wilderness, of persecution, of war; when we remember the risks undertaken and the dangers faced every day by those who sail our ships, work our mines, build our bridges, tunnel our mountains, or run our trains—the amount of courage we are called upon to exercise in our more sheltered lives looks ridiculously small. And yet, as it shames us to confess, we oftentimes halt and hesitate before some insignificant obstacle and perhaps give over the task. That is not a noble thing to do. It is not living up to our birthright. We too have battles to fight, as others have, and as all our fathers had; and if we are to be of any earthly use in the world, we will fight them with a brave heart, fleeing from no responsibility and shirking no duty; we will learn the great lesson of self-reliance, not expecting others to do for us what we are abundantly able to do for ourselves. The education which does not lead up to that is no education at all. One of the things we are here for—in school, in college, in the world itself—is to exercise our powers, win the mastery of our envi-

ronment and so find the satisfaction which only the person of courage can ever know.

Virgil says of the crew that won in the boat race: "They can because they think they can." A motto of the German Emperor consists of the single word "Nevertheless." The world makes way for the man who goes always straightforward with confidence in himself and with the spirit of Nevertheless written in his forehead. However formidable the difficulties may look in the distance, they dwindle or slink away or change to something else as we resolutely move among them. When Gareth, in Tennyson's poem, refused to be frightened at what seemed an unconquerable enemy, he found that all the horrible accoutrements of this enemy, Death, were merely the disguises which concealed a beautiful boy. It almost seems as if the bugaboos of life wear the appearance they do in order to frighten off the faint-hearted and attract the courageous; they are sifters of men. We are always entering the territory of new and untried experiences. But the Providence that keeps a hand on human affairs has preceded us, and has prearranged things every step of the way to the advantage of the man of courage. What Moses said to the children of Israel, as they stood on the borders of the Promised Land and were about to enter it in spite of the giants they had heard of as dwelling there, is said to every man: "Be strong and of a good courage, and fear not, nor be afraid of them."



THE FACE OF A LION

II



ANY of the most important things connected with the subject of courage we have not yet considered. When the ancient Greeks and Romans thought of courage they generally had in mind what we call physical courage—the courage of the soldier in battle, of the sailor buffeting with the waves, of the hunter fighting wild beasts, of the explorer venturing into unknown regions or among barbarous tribes. They never wearied of tales of daring and adventure. They found their ideals of courage in the legends of Hercules and the heroes of the Trojan War. Horatius defending the bridge against an army, or Mucius holding his hand in the flame to show Lars Porsenna what Romans were made of, would belong in their Pantheon of heroic men. This sort of courage is always in demand. As long as we have bodies to be hurt we shall need physical courage to endure the hurt.

But, included in a wider scope of meaning which the word has acquired, there is one kind of courage whose demands are of paramount importance. It constitutes the crown and glory of

all virtue. I refer to the courage which springs from conscience or is directed by conscience. It is sometimes called the courage of one's convictions, or moral courage. It adds to physical courage a tenfold power. You will find a boulder on Lexington Common which is eloquent of the courage of men who dared follow their sense of right. On what is now a bit of lawn in front of the modern law building of Harvard University, twelve hundred men stood with uncovered heads on the evening of June 16, 1775, while the president of the college offered prayer; then they marched away to Bunker Hill. If the ears of Mother England had not been stopped in that day, she would have heard the voice crying out of heaven: "You may fight the principalities and powers of this world with perfect safety, but beware how you lift up your banners against men whose conscience tells them that their quarrel is just." I hope that story about John Hancock is true: when he affixed his bold signature to the great Declaration, he is said to have remarked, as he laid down the pen, "There! John Bull can read that without spectacles."

Occasions arise when we must show our colors, when we must make plain our allegiance, whatever the cost,—occasions in every life which afford no honorable escape through silence or concealment. In moral questions there is no neutral zone; if there were, it would be filled with cowards. There is neither courage nor morality in the man who sits on the fence waiting to see

which way a selfish interest would have him go. Nobody respects him, and certainly he cannot respect himself. The person without moral courage is the most pitiable object in all this world.

We are obliged to handle principles of right and wrong every day of our lives, and it makes a vast difference how we do it. To prefer the smooth thing to the right thing has never yet proved to be the safe thing. If a man fears to take the unpopular side when he sees it to be the right side, or fears to do under any circumstances what will bring on him the criticism or disapproval of others, he has reason to believe that his moral nature needs overhauling. It is easier to say, "I'm with you," than to say, "I'm with you so far as you are right," but there is no courage in it. A distinguished general of the Civil War expressed himself, in a public address, as standing on this sentiment: "My country, right or wrong." He happened to be a man of courage, but there is no courage in such a sentiment. It is never right to do wrong even for one's country. The claims of righteousness have the precedence over all other claims in heaven or earth. He serves his country best, or his party best, who serves righteousness best. But it takes more courage.

When a man fights the battles of a people, knowing their eyes are on him and their sympathy with him, he can do and dare great things with comparative ease. But if he ever separates from his countrymen on some moral issue, or

from his party, or from any group of his associates, and feels their sympathy withdrawn, then, in his isolation, he faces a severer test,—the test of his moral courage. This was the loneliness of Jesus Christ; he saw that his convictions were at variance with the customs and opinions of the world. And yet, as he was quick to explain, he was not alone. And no man of moral courage ever is. The Father is with him; the unseen powers are on his side; the universe is at his back. Every time we take a stand for righteousness, they that be for us are more than they that be against us.

A man needs all the help he can get of this sort, in this era of organization,—of trusts and unions and classes,—when everybody belongs to something, and the something he belongs to has a tendency to dominate and intimidate him into conformity with the whole, whether the whole be right or wrong. Whatever we join, we must see that we do not “belong” to it in the sense of letting it own us both body and soul. Not even the church is entitled to a control like that: only God and righteousness. The progress of society does not depend on the group, but on the freedom, for thought and action, of the individual man; and this it is impossible to keep without moral courage.

There is moral tonic in the great speech which Socrates delivered when on trial for his life. Picture to yourself an old man of seventy years as he stands in the presence of his five hundred

judges, every eye upon him and every ear listening to his words. He knows that the issue of what he says will be life or death; but he shows no trace of fear; his consciousness of rectitude makes him indifferent to results. He knows that by tears and entreaties and denials and promises he can save his life; but these things he regards as unmanly, and brushes them all aside. He plants himself squarely on the justice of his case, and speaks with the perfect frankness of a man whose conscience is clear. And in this mood he utters many true and solemn things. He tells his judges that a man who is good for anything should not consider the chances of living or dying in what he undertakes, but only the right and wrong of it. "Wherever any one either stations himself," he says, "because he thinks it right to be there, or is stationed by his commander, there, I think, ought he to remain and face danger." How much this sounds like what we imagine was in the hearts of those brave young men of Switzerland who laid down their lives in Paris on that dreadful day.

The beautiful portrait of Esther's character, in the Bible book which bears her name, shows that she was possessed of great moral courage. This Hebrew girl, not older than the school-girl of to-day, took her life in her hand, although a queen, when she entered the presence of the Persian despot to plead for her people. Recall, too, the story of Nathan and David. The latter had committed a terrible sin and failed to appre-

ciate its enormity. Then came the prophet Nathan before him one day like an incarnated conscience to reveal him to himself. He began by telling him a parable in which a man is represented as doing a most dastardly thing; and when David's anger was kindled against such a man, the prophet of God looked upon the King of Israel—we can imagine the moral earnestness in his eyes and voice—and said, "Thou art the man." This was direct preaching, and David could not pass it over to his neighbor in the next pew.

History affords more than one instance in which a humble man of God has dared, face to face, to rebuke wickedness in high places. In the fourth century the Emperor Theodosius, enraged at a riot in Thessalonica, had caused many thousands of innocent people to be put to death with the guilty. Not long afterwards he happened to be in Milan and went to the cathedral for the holy communion, as his custom was. But the incarnated conscience awaited him. When the emperor and his retinue arrived, there stood the brave bishop Ambrose in the vestibule, and forbade him to enter. "How wilt thou," said the bishop, "how wilt thou lift up in prayer the hands still dripping with the blood of the murdered? . . . Get thee away, and dare not to heap crime upon crime." Those were bold words to address to the emperor of the Roman world. But Theodosius quailed before them, and, in trying to stammer out an excuse, he appealed to David's sin. The bishop replied: "If thou hast imitated

David in his sin, imitate him also in his repentance." And so he did. The emperor made a public confession, and afterward said that in Ambrose he had found the first man who told him the truth.

One of the noblest examples of moral courage which history records is that of Martin Luther. In spite of the warnings of friends and of his own consciousness of peril, when summoned to the Diet of Worms, he declared he would go though there were as many devils in Worms as tiles on the roofs. Think of that august assembly into which this man, unaccustomed to the pomp and ceremonies of the world, was suddenly ushered. In the presence of the emperor, in the presence of sovereigns, princes, dukes, margraves, archbishops, bishops, the Pope's legates, the ambassadors of foreign courts, he was asked to recant. What did he do? He replied that, unless shown to be wrong, he could not recant, since it was unsafe to do anything against conscience. Then in the midst of those unsympathetic faces, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and uttered those memorable concluding words: "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen."

Some years ago a candidate for a very high office in this country had his courage tested in a different way. There was a moral blot on his record which, if known and uncontradicted, might ruin his chances. During the canvass the old story was raked up, and a friend of the candidate, familiar with the facts, telegraphed him to ask

what answer should be made. The wire flashed back this magnificent reply: "Tell the truth."

As we turn from examples like these to our own lives, we recall occasions, no doubt, when we miserably failed in moral courage. So much easier it is to hedge and evade and remain silent and stick to an error than to take a square stand for truth and right. It seems almost impossible for some people to say either yes or no until they are sure what it is that other people want them to say. Their standard is the expected rather than the right. They wilt before the slightest opposition. They would not for the world offend anybody—except God and their own conscience. They are more afraid of ridicule than of a loaded gun. They would rather fight a duel than confess a fault or change an opinion.

Not so Abraham Lincoln. He had manliness and courage enough to say in a letter to General Grant: "You were right and I was wrong." Large natures give themselves little concern about being either logical or consistent; they give themselves great concern about being right. This is a marked characteristic of Theodore Roosevelt. "I have seen him put to the test a hundred times, in little things and in great," says his friend, Jacob Riis, "and never once did he fail to ask the question, —if there was any doubt about it, after all was said and done,—'Which is right?' And as it was answered, so was the thing done."

And yet many a man will hesitate to express an opinion, or to make a motion, or to advance

a suggestion, until he thinks it will meet with the approval of others. Coleridge once said that "no man is ever so sure of anything but that he feels a little surer if only somebody else will say that he thinks so too." But there are some things we ought to be sure of, though the whole world deny them. Listen to your own instincts; they will tell you the truth. Have courage enough to believe them and to obey them. Never let such a microbe as the love of popularity get into your moral life. You may never get it out again, and, in that case, you are doomed. You can get along without the praise, or even without the approval, of other people, but you cannot get along without the approval of your own conscience. I would not give a fig for the person who is always taking his color from his surroundings, always deriving his moral judgments, not from his sense of right, but from his idea of what other people will think.

I have dwelt so long on this division of the subject that there is but little time for considering other kinds of courage. President Hyde of Bowdoin College, in his interesting essay on the Cardinal Virtues, speaks of what he calls the courage of time and the courage of space, referring to the little sacrifices that right-minded people always make to be punctual in their appointments and to keep things in their places. Punctuality has been called the courtesy of kings; it is practiced most among high-bred people. Orderliness is what gives harmony in place of discord in music, beauty instead of ugliness in art, and power

instead of wastefulness in everyday life; it enables us to get the maximum of result from the minimum of effort. Homer describes the Trojans as pouring forth to battle in a helter-skelter confusion like a flock of sheep, the tribes that composed the mass all shouting in their various languages. But he pictures the conquering Greeks as moving forward in a quiet and orderly manner:

*"So moved the serried phalanxes of Greece
To battle, rank succeeding rank, each chief
Giving command to his own troops; the rest
Marched noiselessly; you might have thought no voice
Was in the breasts of all that mighty throng,
So silently they all obeyed their chiefs,
Their showy armor glittering as they moved
In firm array."*

One of the four great virtues, as taught by the ancient Greek philosophers, is self-control. It is well to refer to it here on account of its close relation to courage. As courage means the willingness to endure pain, so self-control means the willingness to forego pleasure, for the sake of some object in view. It is the other half of courage, so to speak, inasmuch as the giving up of a pleasure is of itself a pain. Its importance we can hardly overstate. Whether a man shall go through life as a king, or as a slave, is likely to hinge on the question of self-control. Many a case of success and many a case of failure in life are traceable to the answer which that question receives. The mastery of circumstance begins with the mastery of self. Every advance in self-control means an

advance in character and personal power. The man who controls his appetites, his temper, his tongue, his faculties of body and mind, compelling them to serve instead of allowing them to rule, will find the door of opportunity opening everywhere at his approach. The man who flies in a passion surrenders his case. The man who loves ease better than he does his goal will leave his bones by the way. The course of every life runs near the land of the Lotus-Eaters and the shore of the Sirens; he that tarries or yields is lost.

This topic of self-control is a large one; but we must pass on. A word should be said about the object and the willingness which, with the pain as already described, are elements of courage. Unless something is to be gained—something beyond an exhibition of daring or more worth while than mere notoriety—then, no matter what effort a man puts forth or what risk he runs, there is no true courage in the case. Such acts as going over Niagara Falls in a barrel, or jumping from the Brooklyn Bridge, or crossing the Atlantic Ocean in a dory, just to attract attention, carry no moral power; they indicate bravado and vanity; they are reserved for the foolhardy, who have never learned that living is a serious business. Life is not to be thrown away; nor is it to be jeopardized, or even put to inconvenience, except for adequate cause. Every true man knows that there are real causes enough for self-sacrifice, and he never attempts to create artificial ones. The cavalry charge of Major Keenan at Chancellors-

ville, though he and every man with him knew it meant certain death, was not without an object. Had those three hundred men charged that army of ten thousand merely to perform a daring deed, history would be obliged to write them down as three hundred fools instead of three hundred heroes. It is the object that glorifies the act. To make a martyr of one's self just for the sake of being a martyr deserves no praise. Sacrifice in and of itself is devoid of merit. A brave man will dodge a cannon ball or a mosquito bite if he can; but he will shrink from nothing that stands between himself and a worthy goal.

On one occasion when William of Orange was giving orders to the members of his staff on a battlefield of Flanders, he discovered near him the deputy governor of the Bank of England, who had been drawn to the place by mere curiosity. "Sir," said the king sharply, "you ought not to run these hazards; you are not a soldier; you are of no use to us here." "I run no more hazard than Your Majesty," the man replied. "Not so," said the king, "I am here where it is my duty to be, and I may without presumption commit my life to God's keeping; but you" — The sentence was left unfinished as the man fell dead at the king's feet. "That was a foolish courage," says *The Outlook* in recounting this incident; "life is too precious to be wasted in sham battles."

The object in view is what glorifies an act on the assumption that the act is a voluntary one. And here comes in the element of willingness.

The act must be done in obedience to a command we issue to ourselves. It is what we choose. The seat of every virtue, as of every vice, is found in the will. The important thing is not what we achieve, but what we are desiring and trying to achieve. The world in its cool, calculating way looks chiefly at results; the true way is to look chiefly at the purpose.

At first thought it might seem that the employer, in the Parable of the Hours, was unfair in giving the men who had worked but one hour as much pay as he gave those who had worked the whole day through; yet he was perfectly fair. The reward was not for work, but for willingness. The men who stood idle in the market place were all the while ready and willing to work, but no man had hired them; their opportunity did not come till the eleventh hour; then they made the most of it. Not only those who bear the burden and heat of the day, but those who are willing to bear the burden and heat of the day, are entitled in the realm of moral values to the full day's reward. Not only the soldier who lays down his life for duty's sake, but the soldier who would lay down his life if the occasion required, deserves well of his country.

Courage, as the etymology of the word implies, is a matter of the heart. We cannot know, therefore, who are courageous and who are not until they are put to the test. There is a vast deal of latent courage in the world; we cannot see it; but it is there on demand. Every war calls

it out, every epidemic, every great fire, every steamship or railway accident. The morning paper of almost any day records some brave or self-sacrificing deed which strengthens our hope for the world.

It is inspiring to think that heroes and heroines may be among us whom we do not know as such, and who do not know themselves as such, but who at some future day will stand revealed. We cannot be sure as to the courage in our own hearts until occasion makes its demand. It behooves us, then, to strengthen the will; to learn the meaning of sacrifice, not by hearsay but by experience; and to keep the ideal of duty ever before our eyes, in order that we may increase our reserve of moral power, which in time of need will express itself in courageous words and courageous deeds.



THE FACE OF AN OX

I



THE examples of praiseworthy conduct which have thus far been cited in these chapters were drawn, for the most part, from the striking and exceptional in life; they were the result of special opportunities such as will never come to the majority of men; they lay above the everydayness of life, and many of them rose into mountain peaks of heroism which can be seen and recognized afar off. Such examples are of the utmost value for their stimulating and lifting power; they show the possibilities of that human nature which is common to us all. But it would never do to let the matter rest there. It must not be supposed that the best and truest service is necessarily anything that attracts attention. This, indeed, has already been said, but it should be said now in a more emphatic way. It would be absurd for us to go out seeking a quest, after the manner of Don Quixote, when there are useful things, even if not conspicuous things, to be done just where we are.

We should remember that the great deed, the heroic act, is only the natural outcome of pre-

vious conditions; the extraordinary springs out of the ordinary; there is nothing isolated or sudden in nature or history or individual life; progress is made, not by outbursts, but by silent evolution; every act of a person grows out of and is connected with the general trend of his life as truly as a branch grows out of and is connected with the tree; the process is long; it is the revelation that seems sudden. Wellington once said that the battle of Waterloo was won at Eton and Rugby. In the same way the Franco-Prussian War was decided, long before Sedan, by the work and discipline of the Prussian schools. Students of music soon learn that in order to master the piano something more is required than merely to lay their hands on the keyboard and wiggle their fingers. Listen to a concert in which a hundred and fifty performers take part; how the sounds fly off from strings and pipes and human voices; how they mingle and blend and harmonize; all so easily and beautifully done! But think of the hours and years of tedious practice represented there; if each performer has given ten years to his work, you have in the aggregate the labor of a person for fifteen hundred years to prepare for you that pleasant hour. When the artist John S. Sargent was in this country, he was paid, if report be true, ten thousand dollars each for some of the portraits he painted, though the actual work required but a few days. It is the same story—previous study, training, self-denial, experience, skill. A famous author was asked one

day how long it took him to write a certain poem which had received its form at his hands in a few hours. He replied, "Forty years." It required years and years to lay the foundations of Minot's Ledge Lighthouse, but after that the lighthouse went up in six months. A floating iceberg, with the sunlight beating on its pinnacles and towers, is a beautiful object; but for the hundred feet you see above the ocean surface there are eight hundred feet below. And so everywhere the seen is built upon the unseen, and would be impossible without it. The foundations come first. Preparation requires vastly more effort than performance does. We should fix our thoughts less on the single act that wins admiration and more on the faithful way in which we can meet the common duties that come to us day by day. If we are capable of doing anything worth while, we must do it primarily in the dull routine of life's workshop.

And this brings us to the face of an ox,—the face of what some people perhaps consider the dullest and most prosaic of all God's creatures. There is nothing out of the ordinary about the ox—unless it be the fact that he is extraordinarily ordinary. He lacks imagination; the poets have no use for him; the herald's office, where coats of arms are made, will not touch him. The Lion of St. Mark looks down from his pedestal with considerable scorn, we might imagine, on the Ox of St. Luke. The ox plods along, never hurrying, never worrying, and seems perfectly

content with his lot; he is a most unromantic beast. And yet he is a most useful one. Among animals he is nature's great utilitarian and the steadfast friend of man. He plows our fields, draws wood for the fire, and carries heavy burdens all his days; and when he dies he bequeaths his muscles to us for beef, his fat for tallow, his tail for soup, his stomach for tripe, his hide for shoes, his hair for holding the mortar on our walls, his hoofs and horns for glue and knife handles, and his bones for fertilizers. "Nothing of him that doth fade." The face of an ox symbolizes work and drudgery and patient perseverance—three of the indispensable things in every successful life.

Hard work, for one reason or another, does not receive the same cordial welcome from most people that idleness does. We greet holidays with smiles and applause, but allow working days to come soberly along like guests at a funeral. This little antipathy between work and poor human nature takes on at times exaggerated forms, as witnesses the great army of tramps and idlers, of swindlers and speculators, of all sorts and conditions of men who are trying to get something for nothing. The sentence that might appropriately be inscribed over the gateway of every workhouse, jail and penitentiary in the land—the sentence of widest application to the inmates of those institutions—is this: "They did not mean to work." Satan finds his easiest game among the idle, the shiftless, and the pleasure-

loving; he grows discouraged with the man who keeps busy at some useful task.

What, then, is work? It is certainly nothing to run away from if you want your life to be worth living. It consists in lending a hand and contributing to the forces that make the world. It builds things up and makes them better. It builds the worker up and makes him better. It lifts the human toward the divine; yea, it brings them together. God works; therefore men should work. That apostle of work, Thomas Carlyle, has said: "All true work is sacred; in all true work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Labor, wide as the earth, has its summit in heaven."

And so work is not a curse laid on the race; we must get rid of that idea at once; it is the race's opportunity. No people ever rose in the scale of being until they had learned the value of work. Every step upward means more work done. When men began to make pottery they ceased to be savages; when they made their weapons and other implements out of metal instead of stone, thus using more effort, they had advanced a still longer way toward civilization; as soon as they invented a phonetic alphabet and took pains to keep a written record, they had crossed the line into the civilized state. The working nations are the superior nations. In the long run the implements of labor are more than a match for the implements of war. When the sword is beaten into the plowshare the result is an increase of

power. Assyria with its terrible might is only dust on the face of the earth. Israel, which exalted work and not plunder, rules the world by its ideas. In the eighteenth century, two great European nations were striving for the mastery in North America, each by a different method. One of them sent soldiers and war material; it seized and fortified commanding points; it emphasized force. The other sent farmers and mechanics and students, who cleared the forest, tilled fields, laid out roads, built homes and planted schools; it emphasized work. By and by the plowshare came into contact with the sword, the home with the fortress, the worker with the fighter, and what was the result? The sword, the fortress and the fighter vanished away, while the plowshare, the home and the worker inherit the land.

When people despise work, or relegate it to inferiors as something unworthy the dignity of highborn men, decay has already set in and they are going the way of Rome and of Spain. Every rise or fall in a man's real power depends oftener than he thinks on his estimate of work. Heaven holds its prizes just above our grasp, though not above our reach, in order to stimulate our effort. He that will not work for them is not worthy of them. Wealth, social station, talent, even genius, — these count for very little without work. Some one has gone so far as to describe genius as an infinite capacity for taking pains. Milton speaks of "laborious days" for the man who would win a name. If we could look at the original manu-

script in the case of almost any great poem which people imagine to have been struck off by "inspiration," without labor, we should find many a telltale erasure and interlineation. Plato is said to have written one of his sentences in seven different ways before getting it into the form he wished. Tennyson, the most musical of English poets except Milton, was one of the hardest of workers. Easy writing generally makes hard reading. Education means work; money will not buy it; you get out of your books only what you pay for, not in money, but in work. Even truth is an achievement; it comes to those who work for it.

Of course there are many kinds of work, but no matter what our ordinary employment may be, we shall do well to take to ourselves the advice that St. Paul gave the Thessalonians, and for some of the time work with our own hands. By working with our hands we come into fellowship with a larger number of our fellow men than in any other way. John Ruskin took a party of his Oxford students once and went out to help repair the highway, by breaking stone and shoveling dirt, in order to show his belief in the honorableness of such toil. One of the sayings attributed to Christ—lost for nineteen centuries, but finally recovered from an Egyptian papyrus roll—is this: "Cleave the wood, and you will find me; lift the stone, and I am there." We do not forget that he worked with his own hands at the carpenter's bench. Even Greek mythology contains some glimmerings of the divineness of

hand-labor. Most of the Olympian divinities had nothing in particular to do, and apparently they did not want to have. They preferred to spend their time in feasting and gossiping and meddling with other people's affairs. When mortals happened to meet one of them, the chances were that, like the Scotchman's dog, he was either going to or coming from mischief. But there were two shining exceptions,—Hephaestus, the God of Fire, and Athene, the Queen of the Air,—who worked with their own hands, making useful and beautiful things for both gods and men. One of the pleasantest pictures of ancient Greek life, so often referred to by the poets, is that of the matron surrounded by her maids, when they were all engaged with needle or distaff in some useful work. That is an interesting scene which Virgil portrays, of thousands of Phoenicians at work, with the diligence of bees, on the walls and temples and other buildings of rising Carthage. Modern education has begun to recognize the fact that we should train the hand by giving it something to do, as well as train the mind by giving it something to think about.

All real work is an honor to the person who does it. And by real work I mean work that is worth doing because it really benefits somebody. It makes no difference whether the implement used be pen or pickaxe, hammer or hoe, needle or broom. If the thing is worth while, then the work is real work. Many more persons, however, than those referred to above as belonging in jail

or penitentiary appear to go through life with no sense of responsibility in the matter of work of any kind; their wants are supplied, and why should they work? Some of them live sumptuously every day, and what is the use of their making themselves miserable by work? They suppose, apparently, that all the necessities and most of the luxuries of life—bread and butter, coffee and beefsteak, clothing of every kind, railway tickets, umbrellas and automobiles—grow on bushes by the side of the road, and that, when you want anything, all you have to do is to stretch out your hand and pick it off. Yet, curiously enough, these persons, along with all others who will not work themselves, are never in favor of having all work abolished from the world. They know, deep down in the uncontaminated part of their nature, that life without work—without somebody's work—would be unbearable and impossible; what they see clearest is that it would be uncomfortable. They do not really believe in the bush-by-the-side-of-the-road theory which they so eagerly maintain.

And here comes in the meanness of such an attitude. They expect to profit by the work of somebody else; their plan is to do the spending, and let other people do the working; they are willing to be the paupers of society. The real pauper does not necessarily live in the almshouse or receive help from the town; he may live in a palace with plenty of money and an army of servants. The word "pauper" means a poor man;

and what men are poorer than those who insist on having everything done for them, but do nothing for others in return? The real pauper is the man who will not work when he has the ability to work; he is the man who takes more from the world than he is willing to give back to the world; the balance in life's account stands against him.

We are all of us consumers; we consume food and clothes and fuel and books and a hundred other things; and right-minded people never get far in life before finding themselves confronted with the question of willingness to become producers also; that means work. What we consume was produced by work: whose work? If not ours, then what obligation rests on other people that does not rest on us, to do some of the producing? "But," some one interposes, "I am not a beggar; I pay for what I have; I pay in money, and money represents work." "True," might come the rejoinder, "money does represent work; but have you ever considered the full meaning of that fact? Whose work do you have in mind? There never has been any work without a person behind it. The bit of money I hold in my hand is the hard work of a man in the hot sun, or at the bottom of a mine, or amid the perils of the sea, for a whole day; it is the work of a poor woman with her needle for three whole days; it is the work of a child, kept out of school, for an entire week. This bit of money begins to throb; there are heart-beats in it; what I hold here is a part of somebody's life; it is human toil and sacri-

fice; it is a sacred thing; I dare not treat it flip-pantly; I must see that when it goes from me, it goes for a worthy object. Yes, money represents work; but the question is, Does it represent any of your work?"

The man who thinks he can discharge his obligations by paying in money for the things he receives may be wide of the mark. If he earned the money, well and good; in that case it represents his work, and so far forth he has been a producer. If, however, it came to him by gift or inheritance, then for him to pay it out for the comforts and luxuries he wants is to appropriate the work, to use up a part of the life, of somebody else, and no true man will continue to do this without considering what service, in one form or another, he is rendering in return.

We may look at the matter in a still more concrete form, and say to our moneyed friend: You wear out shoes: suppose you make a pair. You wear out clothes: suppose you make a dress, or a coat, or a hat. You break a pane of glass or tear a curtain: suppose you mend one. You expect three meals a day: suppose you cook and serve them; or, to go further back,—since cooking and serving are the least part of the business,—suppose you sow and harvest the wheat, plant and dig the potatoes, feed and milk the cow and churn the butter. Somebody must do it. Of course it is not meant that every one need do just these particular things; it is meant that every one, according to his ability and opportunity, ought to

do some particular things that will be of value to human life and make it worth while for society to have him in its membership.

Theodore Roosevelt, in one of those utterances for which he is noted concerning moral conduct, says, "Pull your own weight." That means work. And it is a poor sort of man who would not be willing to do as much work as that. Somebody has described the different attitudes which people assume toward work by a story from the old stage-coach times. When a certain driver came to a hard place in the road, he pulled in his horses, and said: "First-class passengers keep their seats; second-class passengers get out and walk; third-class passengers get out and push." That is about the way it is in this world. And yet any man who is worth his salt neither keeps his seat nor walks; he does some of the pushing.

It is a great thing for a man to find his work in life, and when he has found it to do it. We cannot all do the same things, but we can all do something to make the world we live in a better world. We have for our examples plenty of men and women, in every walk and calling, who work, and work hard, but do not work for money alone; they work because they see the need of the world, and, like the Son of Man, came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.



THE FACE OF AN OX

II



WE are not quite done with the face of an ox. The patient beast will let us detain him a bit longer. But, first of all, there is need of making a disclaimer at this point. It may have been surmised that in urging so many strenuous things we mean to leave no place in the good life for recreation and play. Such an intention is farthest from the fact. Play is an essential condition of good work and wholesome living. The bow that is never unbent will lose its power. If we say less about play than about work, it is because play will generally take care of itself; work requires looking after.

In a world where work is the business and play the vacation of life, it is no part of wisdom to reverse the case by making play the business and work the vacation. The growing tendency to disturb the proportion, and let pleasure as such encroach on the rightful domain of more serious things, is attracting the attention of thoughtful minds. If a visitor from the neighboring planet Mars were to spend a week among us reading the newspapers, what would he be likely to re-

port to his Martian friends as apparently the chief end of life on the Earth? If he said money and amusement, such a verdict could hardly be set aside as not in accord with the evidence spread before him in the daily press.

In this great country of ours, with its boundless resources and its well-to-do population, everything is made easy and comfortable in the home, in the school, in the business world, to a degree that would astonish the people of two or three generations ago, if only they could look in upon us now. This, no doubt, is a cause for profound gratitude. At the same time, if it produces a relaxation of effort and an aversion to honest work, then such prosperity becomes an unmitigated calamity. It means a reduction of life. Some of the noblest qualities of the human soul can be kept alive and be developed only by the experience that comes through effort and work. That eminent psychologist, Professor William James of Harvard University, says on this point: "Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day. That is, be systematically ascetic or heroic in little, unnecessary points; do every day or two something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it; so that, when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test." Such advice from such a source is both suggestive and refreshing in these hedonistic times. Some years ago a high prelate of the Roman Catholic Church was quoted as having ex-

pressed the opinion that war is a good thing for a country about once in a generation for the sake of the manly qualities of patriotism, effort and self-sacrifice which it calls forth. That is not very different from what Tennyson teaches in his beautiful poem "Maud." Perhaps neither prelate nor poet intended to be taken too literally. And yet, when some great principle compels the issue, even war with all its sufferings is far less an evil than is a self-seeking life of pleasure and money-getting, or an oyster-like life of ease and indifference.

It is for play, then, to be the servant but not the master of one's life. "Sir," said Herbert Spencer to a foppish clubman who prided himself on his skill at billiards, "to play a good game of billiards is the mark of a well rounded education; to play too good a game is the mark of an ill spent youth." After all is said and done, we feel that the main part of life should be given to something nobler than mere amusement. The waves toss idly at the surface, but the deep currents move toward definite ends. "It is not to taste sweet things," says Carlyle, "but to do noble and true deeds, and vindicate himself under God's heaven as a God-made man, that the poorest son of Adam dimly longs. Show him the way of doing that, and the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero."

When one really enrolls himself among the world's workers, he loyally accepts the fact that there is no way of doing work except by working.

If after a time the work he once shrank from becomes easy and as agreeable to him as play, so much the better; but he did not make that the condition of accepting it. If one has a room to sweep or a cord of wood to saw, it will not help matters to make believe that the broom is a golf stick or the saw a tennis racquet. All sugar-coating of necessary tasks may be left to those whose wills are weak. When a true man has anything to do he will stand up and do it in a manly way. And he will do it thoroughly. This is an important part of the business, so often it happens that the two paths that lead, the one to success and the other to failure, diverge at this point. "Does he do thorough work?" That is the question which the employer wants answered. There are times when it is wise to let well enough alone, but there are more times when that proverb is seized upon as an excuse for doing with indifference what ought to be done with thoroughness. Half-done, slipshod, indifferent work is as bad as no work at all, and frequently worse. A ship founders, a bridge falls, a building collapses, a theatre burns, with fearful loss of life, and too often the reason is that some contractor, or workman, or inspector, only half did his work. It would make us more painstaking, perhaps, if we would bear in mind that there are far-reaching consequences for good or evil to others as well as to ourselves, not only from the work we do, but from the way we do it. A ship is wrecked off the coast, with a hundred souls aboard. They

succeed in getting a line to the shore: the question now is, Will the line hold? Everything depends on how the man in the ropewalk did his work. He had gone to his work one day, poor man, thinking how little he could do in the world—only stepping back and forth, back and forth, monotonously twisting ropes—and wondering if it really made much difference in what way he did that little. Nevertheless, he determined to be scrupulously faithful, even in the little things, and he never knew that on that day he saved a hundred lives. There are two ways, the slipshod way and the thorough way, of sweeping a floor, of darning a stocking, of writing a letter, of getting a lesson, or of doing anything, even of shutting a door, and we must not delude ourselves with the idea that it makes no difference which of those two ways we practice. The student who goes to college gets a new light on the value of thoroughness in preparation. And when he goes out into the world he will find himself helped or hindered according to the way he did things in school or college.

The word "drudgery" does not suggest anything very inspiring, but it describes something very necessary. Nobody likes drudgery, but every useful person must encounter it. Some forms of work reward the worker as he goes along; the artist rejoices to see the portrait take shape and beauty under his hand, the author his story, the architect his building; and yet, in each case, there is a vast deal of drudgery in the background

somewhere. It is an accompaniment of all real work. It is a dry and thirsty land; we pass through it because the road passes through it, in order to reach some better place beyond. No man ever accomplishes much until he acquires the fine art of meeting drudgery with an unruffled spirit. Thomas Carlyle may have been a bear in his manners, but when he had a task to perform, he could put on the oxlike face of slow, laborious toil, and keep it on until the task was done. The story is told of Sir Walter Scott that, after he had finished one of his great books, the huge pile of manuscript accidentally caught fire from an overturned candle and was totally destroyed. He had no other copy, and all there was to show for months of hard work was a pile of ashes. What did he do? He pulled himself together with grim determination, and with infinite patience recomposed and rewrote the book from beginning to end.

President Eliot is reported to have said that nine tenths of his time is given to drudgery. If that is true of the president of a great university, with its varied interests, what must be the life of the stoker on an ocean liner who does nothing but shovel coal; of a miner who enters the shaft before sunrise and leaves it after sunset without seeing the light of day for a week at a time; or of the seamstress whose "stitch, stitch, stitch" has received an immortal recognition in the poem of Thomas Hood? What of the poor woman who keeps the home for her fatherless

children, cooking, washing, mending, doing the thousand and one things her life requires, over and over again, day after day, year after year? "I do believe," said Phillips Brooks,—and it is as true of a woman as of a man,—“I do believe the common man’s task is the hardest. The hero has the hero’s aspiration that lifts him to his labor. All great duties are easier than the little ones, though they cost far more blood and agony.”

And that is the way the Bible looks at it too. Isaiah says, speaking of those who wait upon the Lord, “They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Flying, running, walking: is the order correct? Yes, it goes from the easiest to the most difficult. “First the ideal,” says George Adam Smith, “and then the rush at it with passionate eyes, and then the daily trudge onward.” The eagle in us may mount up with wings, as a splendid dream; the lion in us may run forward, as enthusiasm in some inspiring occupation; but the patient ox in us must be content to walk, as unquestioning loyalty to the duties of everyday life. The climax is reached in the commonplace. We mount up with wings in order that we may run, and not be weary; we run that we may walk, and not faint.

*“Tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.”*

The monotony of repetition, the constant deal-

ing with little things, when the goal is far off or out of sight, is what puts the stoutest heart to the test. And yet that is the test we are called to endure. A person's character is most clearly shown by the way he deals with the commonplace. We must learn to meet the irksome or the ordinary in life with a determined will. It is not something to be avoided, but something to be overcome. It would be pleasanter, no doubt, to sketch landscapes and do fancywork than to dig potatoes and wash dishes, but there are times when it is not half so noble. The family needs something to eat, and a clean plate to eat it on, before it needs pictures and lace. The world is immensely enriched by its works of art, but it could get along without them better than without the common things which drudgery supplies.

The late Joseph Parker of London once said this about work: "I saw upon the face of a watch three workers. There was a very thin one, so thin that I could barely see it, and it seemed to be moving in a little circle of its own, and to have nothing to do with the other workers. One of the other workers was long and genteel and graceful. The third worker was short and slow. I looked at them for a while, and I said, 'There can be no doubt in the mind of any one who looks at this watch who the worker is: the worker is evidently that little one that moves in a circle of its own. I can see it move; it moves lightly, blithely, trippingly; I can see it. The long one I can hardly see move at all until I have been watch-

ing it for a considerable time; and as for the short one, I think I may safely declare that it does not move at all.' See how a stranger to the mechanism of a watch can talk; how ignorant he is of what the workers are doing! You may take off the little thin worker and do very little damage; you may even take off the long and graceful worker, and, though you will suffer a considerable injury, yet you can do without its service at all. But if you take off that little, short, slow worker, you could never tell the time of day." So important for the world is the slow, steady-going, unattractive, unregarded work that if we were permitted to add a new saint to the calendar, we could hardly do better than to select some one worthy of the name of St. Drudgery.

Work is a test of character; drudgery in work is a greater test; but the supreme test is patience and perseverance in the task on which you have entered. It has passed into a proverb that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. It is his who keeps at it. An express train takes you more quickly to your destination, not because it runs faster, but because it makes fewer stops, than other trains. "An engine of one cat-power running all the time," said George William Curtis, "is more effective than one of forty horsepower standing idle." Justin McCarthy, asking General Grant what he considered the first requisite of a general, received the reply: "Patience." General Grant was the man who had said at a critical time, "I will fight it out on this

line if it takes all summer." Tamerlane, the great Oriental conqueror, is said to have taken a lesson in patience one day from an ant that he watched trying to carry a little burden up a small incline. The ant made sixty-nine unsuccessful attempts, falling back each time just as he neared the top, but the seventieth carried him over the obstruction and sent him on his way. It is a noble saying, which comes to us from the wisdom of the East, that heroism is patience for one moment more.

The history of discovery, of invention, of the accomplishment of great purposes, is the old story, over and over again, of patience and perseverance. All things are possible to the man who works and waits. "They will hear me yet," said the young Disraeli, as he was laughed down in his first speech before Parliament; and they did. The charm of the Odyssey is in the way its hero holds to his purpose through every baffling circumstance, and reaches his goal at last. The difference between Columbus and his men lay in the fact that their perseverance gave out, while his never faltered.

*"He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: 'On! sail on!'"*

Laura Bridgman and Helen Kellar are famous names in the history of education; what they have achieved, being deaf and dumb and blind, is properly regarded as marvelous. But the greater marvel is found in their teachers. Dr. Howe was

the Columbus in finding a way to the imprisoned soul; and Miss Sullivan nobly followed along the same path. Everything was due to infinite patience and heroic perseverance. Twenty years ago, as Jacob Riis tells the story, two wealthy highborn young men entered political life in New York City at the same time. One of them, meeting with obstacles, became disgusted and withdrew; the other, in spite of obstacles equally great, kept bravely on. To-day the former is a self-expatriated American, living in Europe for his own pleasure; the latter is President of the United States, and is living for service to his country.

But in spite of all the accumulated wisdom of the past, in spite of the innumerable shining examples of what perseverance alone will do, we still find that the commonest defect of character to-day is fickleness of purpose. Most persons make a good beginning, but do not hold out. The minds of some are like humming birds that flit from flower to flower; they are caught by whatever looks attractive for the moment, and are then off again before we know it. There are persons who desire an education, for example, but have no idea of the work it involves; they do not see, perhaps, why it should involve any; they have not considered that part of the business. They undertake mathematics, it may be, but presently when tribulation or persecution arises, they conclude that their minds are not properly organized for mathematical activities. They turn

to German, and in a short time they find that German has its snares and pitfalls and impenetrable thickets. They flee, next, to the pleasant land of literature and history, but soon discover that even there some days are dark and dreary. Perhaps they abandon the idea of an education and go into business, first one kind and then a different kind. But this only makes another chapter of the same old story; that everlasting necessity to work and fight and overcome something meets them at every turn; like the old navigators of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they are trying to find some easy way to the Indies, and it takes them a lifetime to learn that there is no easy way to any desirable goal. This they might have known at the start; the world of experience has been shouting it into men's ears for countless generations; Plato said, twenty-five hundred years ago, that all noble things are difficult to do; it is idle to seek the nobility without mastering the difficulty; the thing is simply impossible.

But perhaps we should feel most sympathy for those persons who have a strong definite purpose and just miss the complete triumph; they possess the right idea and mean to work; they keep hopefully and bravely on for a long, long time, and then, all of a sudden, their courage fails; they give up the game when they are really near the goal; how near they can never know; a little further effort and the prize would have been theirs; they just fall short of the heroic,

because they lacked the patience for one moment more.

*"Oh, the little more, and how much it is,
And the little less, and what worlds away!"*

Many a ship is wrecked on the rock that stands not far from the harbor; the name of the rock is "Almost." It makes less difference than one thinks what worthy task he undertakes provided he perseveres to the end. All roads of worthy and conscientious effort come out at the same point—success.

The New Testament returns again and again to this theme of perseverance. Everybody that would live the true life is warned of its difficulties; he must count the cost at the start like the man who would build a tower, lest the work be left undone; the disciple who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God; the crown is for him that overcometh; the glad thought of the Son of Man was that he had finished the work that had been given him to do.

Learn, then, the lesson of the face of an ox. Work while it is day. "Rest elsewhere," was the noble motto of one of the great Netherland statesmen who resisted the domination of Philip of Spain. Do not be afraid of hard work and slow work and dull work. Stick to the task you have chosen. Stick-to-it-iveness, as an old teacher used to call it,—patient continuance in well-doing, as the Bible describes it,—will do more for any one

than unregulated enthusiasm. Blessed are they
that endure to the end.



THE FACE OF AN EAGLE

I



YEARS ago I used to spend my summer vacations on a beautiful island off the coast of Maine. The island was shaped somewhat like the capital letter H, and one of its projecting points was a high rocky promontory which, with its wild retirement and its tall, dead trees, afforded an excellent home for eagles. Many a time, as I looked across the intervening bay, have I seen one of those strong-winged birds launch out into the open heaven and sail away toward the mainland till he dwindled to a speck and finally disappeared. He swept the miles behind him with such ease and rapidity that I wondered how it would seem to travel in that way, and to see the world from an eagle's point of view. The petty things that annoy us here could not follow us; they never rise more than a few feet from the surface of the earth. We should be the slaves of no time-tables up there in the clear sky, and we should find no toil or drudgery; all would be light and air and freedom and gladness.

Such is the picture that comes to my mind with great vividness in connection with this chapter

on the face of an eagle. What will here be said may seem to contradict in part some of our previous conclusions; but the contradiction is only apparent. It was felt, no doubt, that the lionlike and oxlike features of service pictured life as a very strenuous affair; and so they did; that is what life is—the life that is worth anything. Our Lord took particular pains—he almost seemed to go out of his way at times—to explain to any new disciple the difficulties and dangers that beset the path. He wanted no follower who could not make up his mind to meet them with a brave heart. The greatest of the apostles chose the figures of the foot race and the battle—the two most strenuous exercises in which the men of his day engaged—to indicate the nature of the true life. Let no one make the mistake of thinking goodness the path of least resistance and so choosing it on that ground, as college students sometimes choose their electives. The good life means hard work.

At the same time, there is another phase—or, as we have been calling it, another face—of this important matter. The life of work and self-denial has its great compensations and its hidden sources of strength. No man who really leads such a life would for one moment think of exchanging it for any other. The heaven where there is nothing to do but “loaf around the throne” would be no heaven to him. He would follow the example of the sailors in Kipling’s “Last Chantey,” who flung down their golden

harps and made for the open sea, with all its perils and privations. What we need is not so much rest from labor as rest in labor. It makes no difference how great the task, if only our hearts are greater. The question is not what effort we are called upon to use, but what reserve of power there is behind the effort and what ideal we are striving to attain. These are the things that keep our hearts up. In one of Raphael's paintings of St. Michael and the Dragon, the archangel is given a serene, almost pleasant expression, such as you might expect after the victory instead of in the midst of the conflict. But what you see in his face is the serenity of righteousness; it springs from confidence in a reserve of power that is more than equal to the task and that renders the victory already assured. One of those huge steam hammers which are used in the manufacture of steel can strike a blow sufficient, as you would almost believe, to smash a battleship; it can also descend gently enough to drive a tack, or press the crystal on the face of a watch. Consider the great rivers of the world, as they move seaward with an ever increasing, irresistible flood. The Amazon rolls as far as from California to Maine, its mouth is almost as wide as the distance from Boston to Portland, and it pushes its way into the great deep for two hundred miles: whence came this mighty power? From the springs in the hills; from the silent, invisible mist; from the all-surrounding atmosphere where the sun shines, and the cloud gathers, and the eagle flies.

And so it is with all the power we see; it comes from what is out of sight; oftentimes, from what is out of sight and far away. Have you ever penetrated the depths of a great forest? How still it seems! You think of the trees, perhaps, as doing nothing at all, they seem always to be waiting, as Mr. Emerson said. But are they doing nothing at all? They are sucking juices up from the soil, breathing gases in from the air, absorbing sunlight out of the sky; they are building layer over layer of little cells of growth, and these millions on millions of little cells are continually throbbing with the energy drawn from the sun. But you do not hear them; you look on the trees and say, "How still it seems!" Ages and ages ago there were forests of this kind which gradually sank and became covered over with *débris*; they lay in the earth, pressed down deep and hard, for countless years, till man appeared and finally began to dig them up, piece by piece; and from those black shiny lumps, when put into our furnaces, comes the energy which drives the steamships and railway trains and electric cars of the world; which turns the wheels in thousands of mills and manufactories, and lights and warms our houses. What does the world's work to-day is that primeval sunlight which the trees absorbed from the fountains of the sky and stored so quietly for future use. This shows what the trees were doing, when if you could have stood among them you would have said, "They are doing nothing at all; how still it seems!"

Take one more example. If you visit a great commercial city during its business hours, you find it a beehive of activity. But towards night the traffic slackens, the roar in the streets grows less and less, and fifty thousand men lay down their work and disappear in all directions. The next morning they return from the quiet and peace of fifty thousand different homes, refreshed and strengthened for another day. Has that brief absence meant nothing? It has meant the power to work.

If we are to be worth anything to ourselves or others, we must have our times of stillness and retirement. All the power employed in the world is derived from some fountain of power above the world. The spirit in man needs ready and continual access to the sources of spiritual life. The living creature of Ezekiel's Vision can never dispense with the face of an eagle.

First of all, as a preliminary condition of acquiring those eagle-like qualities which the symbol contemplates, every person should learn the value of sometimes being alone. Swallows that skim the surface fly in companies; the eagle flies alone. We have already referred to the value of mingling with other people, of extending one's self horizontally, so to speak; that constitutes the social self, and an important self it is. We are now referring to the value of extending one's self perpendicularly; that means the individual self, which is no less important than the other. It was intended that we should grow in both

directions. We must take a little time, then, with ourselves; we must sit down with our thoughts, with our dreams, with our consciences. Some people never seem to meet themselves in a quiet and friendly way; they are always at the club, at the party, at the theatre; always somewhere in the crowd, when they are not at work or asleep; they do not like to be alone. But if one does not find that he is agreeable company for himself, how can he ever expect to be for other people? It is the enrichment of the individual self that gives value and power to the social self. Wisdom cries after the man who would serve his fellows to look well to the resources within. Unless he keeps these replenished he will have nothing to bestow. We should pray, as Socrates did, for beauty in the inward soul.

The men who have contributed most to the world have made much of the still hour. The Son of Man went up into a mountain alone; St. Paul withdrew into the desert alone; St. John sat by the seashore of Patmos alone. The mountain of prayer, the desert of meditation, and the island of vision have been mighty factors in the progress of the world. Truth, wisdom, inspiration, are forever flowing in from the quiet places and the lonely places—from the study, the laboratory, the cloister, the chamber of prayer—to sweeten and purify the stream of human life.

Meditation, of which our fathers made so much, has become with us almost a lost art. The things that require time and thought and care,

or that offer no money return, stand a poor chance in the hurry and bustle of modern life. And, in the case of meditation, the worst of it is that we are losing not only the art but the desire. We prefer to take a thing for granted rather than sit down and think it out. We doom ourselves in this way to mental and spiritual poverty. We must recover the desire and the art of deriving satisfaction and enjoyment from our own minds. Better is some thought of our own—a thought we have made a friend of—than a legion of thoughts which belong to other people and afford us only a bowing acquaintance.

The face of an eagle symbolizes aspiration—that energy in the soul which lifts one to broader horizons, nobler conduct and richer enjoyment. This means the recognition and love of the ideal. It means something like

*“The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow;
A devotion to something afar.”*

There appeared some months ago a remarkable newspaper article, in which the writer—a prominent leader in the labor world—set before working men, as the chief objects of ambition, larger pay and shorter hours. Of anything beyond that he had absolutely nothing to say. He spoke as if he regarded those two objects as ends in themselves instead of means to some further ends. There was an utter absence of all idealism. And yet no amount of leisure or creature comforts

can ever make life worth the living if that is the whole of life. The life which does not aspire beyond the line of material things is poverty-stricken indeed. Are we not here to see the beautiful world, and to think God's thoughts after him, and to feel the workings of love in our hearts, and to do what is noble and kind? Have the stars and the trees and the rivers and the hills no message for us? Do we find nothing of interest in the creations of art, in literature, in history, in the lives of heroic men? Do the appeals of patriotism and philanthropy fall dead in our ears? Surely, we hope not. Rome perished not from lack of wealth, but from lack of ideals. When the idle populace cared for nothing but bread and the games,—or, in modern language, for physical comfort and amusement,—then, no matter how lavishly these were supplied, the empire was doomed. It was an ancient belief that so long as the gods remained in a city, the city was safe; when the gods withdrew, it meant that the city was about to fall. The ideals of a people or of a person are the gods that give security or ruin according as they stay or go. The moment our ideals depart, life sinks below the line where it may be called life; it becomes merely existence like the life of the brute.

One should cling to his ideals, then. He should see that he has ideals to cling to—some worthy objects of thought and aspiration. If the world as we see it were the only world open to us, our condition would be forlorn enough; but it is not

the only one, or the best one; we have the privilege of wandering at will through the world of our ideals and of bringing therefrom whatever we like of its richness and fulness to round out and beautify the world of our everyday life. The Golden Rule, the Twenty-third Psalm, the story of Joseph or of Ruth, the courage and perseverance of Ulysses, the sentiment of such a poem as Susan Coolidge's "Every day is a fresh beginning," — any one of these things, or of others like them, might supply just the help and good cheer needed for the daily task. The world of toil and traffic and disappointment surges all about us; but the realm of our better thoughts, like some quiet cathedral that stands on a noisy street, is always near and always accessible. It is a great thing to be able to enter the company of our ideals for a moment, and refresh our hearts with the very images of things as they ought to be. The world can never quite overcome us so long as this refuge remains; and the chances are that we shall find strength enough there to overcome the world.

Ideals, it should be remembered, are not altogether the impalpable and visionary things they seem. They are not bodiless spirits that flit about the world and neither take nor desire any part in actual life. They are very human; they are always trying to embody themselves in persons; and, in fact, they get their strongest influence over us in that way. To associate with persons who are older, or wiser, or nobler than ourselves

—with those who have achieved what we should like to have achieved, or who are what we should like to be, in skill, or knowledge, or character—means always an increase of power. The teacher, or pastor, or friend, whom we “look up to” with love and respect, stands for an embodied ideal, and silently helps lift us to a higher plane. Opportunities for association of this sort no one can afford to neglect.

And especially should we cultivate a fellowship with the great and good minds of the past. That too means power. But why emphasize the past? Because there the opportunity is so great. The past, once so passionate and full of strife, is free of all prejudice now; the smoke of the battle has died away; the artificial distinctions between man and man that perplex the present are forever abolished in the great, silent, democratic past! There the characters of men stand out and are valued for what they are; we may choose whom we will for our friends and choose understandingly as well.

In the city of Florence there is a long, wide portico or colonnade, which extends back from the river bank between two lofty, palatial buildings to the great square in front of the old town hall. Both sides of it are adorned with marble statues of men illustrious for what they have done. All these men represent the same bit of territory on the world's map; most of them—Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Dante, Petrarch, Amerigo Vespucci, and Galileo

among the number—have acquired a world-wide fame; and their statues thus brought together constitute an imposing array. One may imagine that no Tuscan acquainted with his country's history can walk through that colonnade and behold those faces looking down upon him in the stillness of the place without experiencing a thrill of emotion and an uplift of moral power. The west front of Salisbury Cathedral is covered with statues, tier on tier, representing the different classes of persons referred to in the most glorious hymn of the Christian Church. This silent *Te Deum* in stone, whence prophets, apostles and martyrs look out upon the world, is quite as impressive, perhaps, as the music itself of the hymn when rolled through the cathedral arches from the voices and instruments within. The eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, like the Florentine colonnade or the cathedral front, is filled with human figures. There stand the heroes of the nation—in their several niches, as it were—ministering the comfort of faith and courage and inspiration to all who come. No people ever understood so well as the Hebrews did the value of an ideal as exhibited in a personal life. To them the past—the personalized past—was always a living power. The writer meant it when he said that Abel, being dead, yet speaketh. When the Son of Man found little sympathy in his own time, he turned to the past; he was sure of the good men there who had lived and suffered, as he was doing, for righteousness' sake; he made

Moses and Elijah his familiar friends; they could understand him if the world could not.

As a matter of fact, we are cultivating a fellowship with either the good or the bad men of the past every day of our lives. If you do a cruel thing, Nero smiles on you; if you do a mean or insincere thing, Judas beckons you; if you do a cowardly thing, Pilate welcomes you. "Come," they cry, "you belong with us." And so you do, in so far as you are guilty of the same sort of wrong-doing as stigmatizes them. If, on the other hand, you stand for truth and righteousness and courage and helpfulness and hope, the prophets approve you, the apostles are with you, Socrates stretches to you his hand; so do Ambrose and Augustine and Savonarola and Wyclif and William the Silent and Washington and Channing and Phillips Brooks; all the good men and women of all the ages take you for a friend; and the Son of Man himself, standing at the head of so glorious a company, greets you with his "Well done." This is the fellowship into which we may enter on the one condition that we make ourselves worthy of it. These are the lives that have been put to the test and not found wanting. If, in our moments of trial and temptation, we remember them, we shall in that way touch the hem of their garments and feel a virtue go out from them into us.

THE FACE OF AN EAGLE

II



THIS chapter has to do with the companionship of books, of nature, and of God,—three sources of power to which the individual finds readiest access when he is alone; they minister to the aspiring life of the spirit; it is still the face of an eagle.

Of all inanimate things a good book is surely the most like a person; it comes the nearest to being alive with a human soul; it is a house or palace of glass through whose transparent walls we behold the man who wrote it; he is always within; we discern his varying emotions; what he felt and thought, what he liked or disliked, what he was and aspired to be—all this is visible; the immortal part of him is there. And so our minds come into contact with his mind; we recognize some of our own thoughts and feelings which he has expressed so well; they are common to the race, and that is why they survive.

If we should stop to think about it, we should seldom enter a great library without a sense of reverence, almost of awe. A library is the temple of humanity, as a cathedral is the temple of God.

We stand there in the presence of the ages; we are surrounded by the hopes and fears, the aspirations and struggles, the triumphs and disappointments, the crimes, sorrows and heroic deeds of all mankind. Millions of human personalities, in an endlessly receding line that melts away from the glare of to-day into the shadows of the remotest yesterday, peer out upon us from behind every book. We can almost hear, in that quiet place, the heart-throbs of all the generations of the world.

It is said that over fourteen million books have been published since the invention of printing. We cannot read them all. We have probably never seen even the outside of one million. In our whole lifetime we shall read but a few hundred at most, and of these the books we want to make friends of, and seek the company of again and again, will number less than a score—a merest drop in the ocean. It is necessary to select them wisely, for select we must.

The building which contains the Boston public library covers an area of perhaps fifty thousand square feet, and the library numbers over eight hundred thousand volumes. But the gist of all that is there—the essentials of the world's literature—would make scarcely more than an armful. Almost any one can own the world's best books. Among them would be the Bible, Homer and Plato, Virgil and Dante, Shakespeare and Milton; and, though he were allowed but a single armful, he should try very hard to include a few

more, as, for example, Browning, Tennyson, Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, and our own Emerson. Whoever knows these dozen books or authors, as friend knows friend, is rich in the goods of the spirit; whoever knows none of them, though he has read a cartload of modern fiction, is wretchedly poor.

Quality rather than quantity is the rule to be observed when we are reading for power. It is better to know five books well than to know ten thousand superficially. Scarcely one person in a generation can read and assimilate everything as Macaulay did. We must keep within limits. Newspapers and magazines, as valuable as they are, will never make up for the friendship of a few good books. The touch-and-go, hop-skip-and-jump method of reading means a diminishing power of concentration and therefore wastefulness in the end. Virgil, in order to describe a perturbed and wavering mind that had a different purpose for every minute, compares it to an agitated basin of water that reflects the sunlight in a thousand different directions. The mind which reads only the periodicals, or which keeps a continuous panorama of new stories passing before it, might be described in much the same way; whereas the reading and re-reading of some great book has a tendency to give the mind definite ideals and stability of purpose, making it more like an Alpine lake into whose calm depths fall the images of mountains and stars.

Here, then, are a few maxims: Do not con-

fine your reading to any one kind of literature. The Bible—the cream of the literature of the Hebrew people—constitutes the greatest book of culture which the world has seen. Make much of history; there you will discover the tide in human affairs which the Power that “makes for righteousness” directs and impels. Give a large place to biography; in that way you will come closest to the good lives of the past that are capable of moulding yours. Such a book as Plutarch’s “Lives” is a gold mine of character. Read a little poetry every day. Poetry is a spiritual tonic which is greatly needed in this prosaic money-getting age. It holds the true riches of beauty and truth. Everybody can learn to distinguish it from its counterfeit, and to profit by it and derive pleasure from it as well.

A safe, general maxim is this: You may read what you like after you have acquired a liking for what bears the stamp of time’s approval. Do not feel ashamed to confess that you have not read the latest book about which your friends are talking. Know a few of the great books of the past, know them well, and you can let “David Harum” or “Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch” wait your convenience. Read the authors themselves rather than what other people have written about them; the critics are not nearly so useful or so necessary as they seem. Own the books which you take most into your life. Have them in good bindings—rather expensive bindings, if you can. You will in this way learn to treat them better

and to feel greater respect for their personality. Remember, finally, that no vast amount of leisure is required for making one a well-read person. Use the scraps and fragments of time—five minutes here or ten minutes there—and the result will surprise you at the end of a year.

And now as to nature: Make friends with nature. We should not think of nature as only so much dead material—wood and dirt and rock and water. We should think of it as something wonderful, something alive with a spirit that can sympathize with our spirit. The old myth-makers were not wholly wrong; they peopled the woods and streams and ocean depths and mountain heights with beings akin to themselves; when a tree rustled, or a storm arose, or a meteor fell, it was not something that caused it, it was somebody; an invisible person was there.

When the world looks at nature with the commercial eye or with the scientific eye—and these are the two eyes through which the world does most of its looking nowadays—it sees very little of what it needs most to see. Commercially, a tree is a mast, or a beam, or a pile of boards, or a pile of firewood; a meadow is hay and butter; a cataract is a sawmill, or a cotton mill, or an electric lighting plant; a mountain is one of the assets of a summer hotel. Scientifically, all the flowers in the world are merely botanical specimens; all the rocks and hills are geological specimens; all the trees and stars are things for one to guess the names of and put to the test of the book to see

if they are proper trees or proper stars.

The eye one needs to look at nature with, for the purpose here described, is the eye of the imagination. That is about the only eye that ever sees anything clearly and "sees it whole." Its vision, though considerably blurred in the case of most people, is susceptible of cultivation. Look for the beautiful and you will find it in unsuspected places. It is not necessary to know the botanical name and family of a flower before you can see its beauty. Our Lord did not say, "Analyze the lilies;" he said, "Consider the lilies." Consider them in their wholeness; Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Consider the trees; with their many moods and voices they are almost human. Consider the vast deep as you stand by the shore; hear it whisper of infinite and eternal things. Consider the mountains; let their spirit lift you into the atmosphere of all that is pure and noble. Consider the stars; they shine untroubled, no matter what tempests are raging here.

St. Francis of Assisi drew a world of comfort from his communion with nature. The sun was his great shining brother, and the moon his fair shining sister. Wind, river, rock, tree, flower, cloud, fire, frost—these were his brothers, or sisters. The birds, too, were his brothers, and he preached to them. He was himself Little Brother Francis to everybody and everything. That is a rare and beautiful spirit in which to go through the world, is it not? It helped St. Francis to do his

work as one of the great servants of humanity.

Remember, too, how the ancient Hebrews looked at nature. Visible things were only the signs and symbols through which they saw the invisible. In the mountains round about Jerusalem they beheld the everlasting arms of the Lord about his people. They discerned his faithfulness in the stars. Think what this meant to them in the dreary days of their exile. They had been carried away as captives across the vast Asiatic plains; with tear-dimmed eyes they had watched their holy city and beloved mountains sink below the horizon as if forever; they were strangers and slaves in great Babylon, where daily they witnessed the power and pomp and idolatry of their oppressors. Their hearts yearned for home: when would the Lord restore them? That generation passed; and so did the next. Had the Lord forgotten his people? There were no mountains now to remind them of the everlasting arms. But they could look up into the sky. From the dark wicked streets of Babylon they beheld the stars; they noticed that all the stars were in their places; not one was missing; whoever cared for the stars was like a faithful shepherd, bringing them out by number, calling them all by name. Then they remembered that the Shepherd of the stars was their Shepherd, too; he had not, therefore, forgotten Israel; he would never let Israel drop out and be lost. And reasoning thus they found a mighty comfort in the stars.

When you do right the world may sometimes be against you; but the stars are for you, and the mountains, and the trees. Jesus Christ walked everywhere as in his Father's house; he found nature alive with sympathy. An American poet, in some beautiful lines, has represented him as comforted and strengthened for his work by companionship with the trees:

*"Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives, they were not blind to him,
The little grey leaves were kind to him,
The thorn tree had a mind to him,
When into the woods he came.*

*"Out of the woods my Master went,
And he was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When death and shame would woo him last,
From under the trees they drew him last,
'Twas on a tree they slew him—last
When out of the woods he came."*

Closely connected with all this is the third thing I want to say: Cultivate the companionship of God. This takes us to the ultimate source of all life and all power. The history of the world is chiefly the record of what men have thought and felt concerning God. The idea which lay at the root of the ancient family and the ancient state was the idea of God. The priest was more power-

ful than the warrior or the king. The great epics, the great cathedrals, the great works of art, have sprung from a sense of God; and so have great discoveries and most of the great movements among mankind. The ruling idea of Columbus in undertaking his epoch-making voyage was to extend the power of the Church. When armies partake of the sacrament, as they did on the field of Crécy, or when men enter battle singing psalms, like Cromwell's soldiers, or when a general turns aside to pray, as Washington did, we may know that great deeds will be done. Luther's hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God," rolled through Germany with an overcoming power that was not of this world. The most widely sung hymn to-day—used by Catholics as well as Protestants—is, "Nearer, my God, to thee." "All philosophy," said Plato, "is a search for God." The history of a nation and the story of an individual life are alike in this: they show that with a sense of God come strength and the fulfilment of noble ends; without it, failure and ruin. The French nation at one time said there was no God; then came the Reign of Terror. When a man turns God out of his life, he silences life's harmonies, and, like Shakespeare's man that has no music in his soul,

"Is fit for treason, stratagems and spoils."

Men at various times have had strange notions about God; they have made him an arbitrary lawgiver, a tyrant, a bargain-maker, a being that

would trade off benefits for praise and sacrifice. We know now that He is none of these; He is our Father and cares for us more tenderly than earthly parents for their children.

We have learned to some extent who God is; but have we learned equally well where God is? Perhaps you think of Him as far away; beyond the stars, perhaps; in some vague place called heaven, perhaps. That is not what Paul told the Athenians; he told them that God was not far from any one of them. Suppose He were in the room where you sit; suppose He were close by your side. The apostle put it more emphatically than this; he said that in God we live and move and have our being. God made the world and all that in it is; and it requires His constant presence and attention to sustain what He has made; if for one moment He should withdraw, this wonderful fabric of the world would fall to ruins. Every time you look upon the light, or the beauty of a lily, or hear a tree rustle, or a brook murmur, or a bird sing; yea, every time you feel your hand move, or your head turn — you have sufficient evidence that He is not far.

*“The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains —
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?”*

*“Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit
can meet —
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.”*

"And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;

But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He?"

And still perhaps you are saying, "Yes, but if only I could see God as I see my friend." That is just what Philip yearned for when he said to Jesus, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." But has it never occurred to you in what way you see your friend? You have never seen him with your mortal eye. You see what you are pleased to call his body, the expression of his face, the motion of his hand, the nod of his head; these are all external things—mere instruments which your friend uses; himself you do not see. You see him only with the eye of the spirit; you know him because "spirit with spirit can meet." That is the only way we ever see and know one another. And that is precisely the way we may see and know God.

We may go a step farther. When you see a good deed done, are you quite sure that you know who does it? You say your friend, because you saw his hands perform the deed. But are you sure that you saw all? Paul said that the human body is the temple, that is, the dwelling place of the Spirit of God. The good deed is not from your friend alone, but from God himself working in and through the spirit and body of your friend. Every good deed, every act of moral courage, or of self-control, or of generosity, every kind and thoughtful word, every look of sympathy,

no matter who the person is, should fill us with awe: God is there. Goodness is the one awful thing in all this world. Goodness is God-ness. And as to our own selves, if we will cease putting up barriers against God, who is always pressing for fuller entrance into our lives; if we will become unselfish and true and helpful and kind, then, so far forth—and the thought is startling—shall we be able to say in some real sense, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” If only our hearing were a little keener and our vision a little clearer, we should, as Mr. Ruskin says, be forever uncovering our heads in reverence, and putting off our shoes, because of holy ground. When one cultivates his sense of God, he soon finds the commonplace things of earth taking on for him the glory of heaven.



LOSING AND FINDING



WE have been considering some of the great qualities that enter into every true and useful life. Sympathy puts us in touch with other people and fosters the helpful spirit; that is the face of a man. Courage is required for making sympathy available in acts of service, or for making available any other good qualities or powers we possess; that is the face of a lion. Patience and perseverance in the task we undertake will carry us through to the right result; that is the face of an ox. Aspiration gives us a goal among the higher things and enables us to replenish our strength from day to day at the sources of power; that is the face of an eagle.

We now come to a trait or quality that should pervade all the others and in a sense unite them. It has been implied all along. We may call it disinterestedness, though the name is somewhat misleading. Disinterestedness does not mean lack of interest: it means lack of selfish interest; it means being dead to the lower motives and alive to the higher ones. When we possess this quality, our ultimate object is not money, or pleasure, or reputation, or praise, or appreciation; we will do

our duty, we will render our service, whether any one thanks us for it or not, or even whether any one knows about it or not; we will do it at whatever cost. The real reward—for real reward there is—lies absolutely and altogether above the market line; it is something that cannot be bought and sold; it is not, therefore, transferable; it inheres in the service itself; no man can tear them asunder; there is no power in heaven or earth to keep the doer of disinterested service from the reward that goes with it—the only reward worth caring for in the last result.

Two of the things oftenest and most intimately associated with service of every kind are money and glory in its various forms. As motives or as results of what men do they have played a mighty part in the history of the world and of individual lives. Make either of them your ultimate goal and you may or may not achieve it; but certainly you will achieve nothing more; you have stopped too soon in the scale of values and forfeited your chance of reaching the highest and best of all. Let them come to you, however, as the result of good work done, and you may gladly receive them as an aid for doing more good work in the direction of your ideal; you shall not allow them to take the place of that ideal. How far they are motives for any particular service—philanthropic work, for instance—it is perhaps impossible to know, until we know whether or not the service would cease by their withdrawal. Let us briefly consider each of these two things, in order that

we may assess them at their true value and pass beyond them to values of a higher kind.

First, as to money. That some money is necessary and should be sought for, nobody questions. That great wealth may be turned to great uses is equally evident. We shall nowhere find more devoted servants of the ideal than in some of the world's rich men. We must not underestimate what money can do and has done. At the same time we must not overestimate it. It is amazing what has been accomplished without money, or without much of it. Most of the great achievements in art, literature, science, discovery, political freedom, religious toleration, and moral reform have been the work of poor men. The world is indebted, not to Croesus, but to Socrates; not to the money-changers in the Temple, but to Jesus; not to the plunderers of provinces, but to Paul; and so on through the ages.

And it is well to be reminded in this commercial age that the power of money has its limits. Let an American millionaire go to Dresden and ask what the Sistine Madonna is worth; he will be told that the Sistine Madonna is not for sale. "But suppose it were for sale," he insists, "what would the price be? Is it worth half a million dollars?" "Yes," we may imagine some one as saying in reply, "it is worth half a million dollars; it is worth ten million dollars; it is worth what any one chooses to pay and the owner is willing to accept. There is but one Sistine Madonna in the world and there will never be an-

other. We have cornered the market in Sistine Madonnas for all time, and can make the price all the gold and silver in the world as easily as make it half a million dollars. The fact is we have taken the picture out of the class of marketable things and there is simply no price about it. You may look at it and enjoy it as much and as long as you wish, but as for buying it, that is out of the question."

Such an answer is full of light. You may look at a star and enjoy its beauty if you have the eyes, but you cannot buy the star. Men can buy a vast deal less than they think they can. Look at the hill or the mountain or the sweep of meadow land which your neighbor owns and holds at so much an acre; you, with your finer appreciation, may get more from it than he does; there is something there which his title deeds do not cover; beauty is not for sale; that is as much yours as your neighbor's; it is his who has the eyes to see it. And truth is not for sale. And righteousness is not for sale. It is remarkable that the best things, the really desirable things, are never mentioned in the same breath with money; they cannot be gotten for gold; the price of them is beyond the price of rubies; they belong in another realm of values; they are without money and without price because of their incalculable worth.

And yet they may be had; they are freely bestowed on him who is worthy to receive them, and on nobody else. You give your respect or

your friendship to the person you consider worthy of it; you do not sell it, you give it. Why a person should give anything away or do anything for nothing is precisely what a sordid mind is least able to understand. Some people see, or try desperately hard to see, a selfish motive behind every act of other people; they are always suspicious; if a man unites with the church, it is in order to help his business or his social position; if he subscribes generously to public charities, it means that he takes that method of advertising; if he performs an act of neighborly kindness, it must be that he has an axe to grind somewhere. Minds that are soaked with money values and have no ideals outside the commercial realm utterly fail to comprehend the meaning, or even to discover, the existence of disinterested service. When Satan asked, with a gleeful sneer at Job's righteousness, "Does Job serve God for nothing?" he did not dream that the answer would be what it was: "Yes, Job serves God for nothing; he does not serve him for the flocks and herds and worldly prosperity which you think such service brings; he will serve him in adversity just the same; Job serves God for nothing." That is what the Book of Job was written to say and explain.

And that is the character of all true service everywhere; as the world counts values, it must be for nothing. The physician, minister, teacher, every honest worker in any station in life, so far as he is true to himself and his calling, feels a

deeper interest in his work than the mere money return connected with it could possibly arouse. He would do the same work, or some other equally useful,—provided he were given the means to live and do it with,—if all fees and all salaries were swept away. The compensation lies in the service itself. Schliemann, the student of Greek archaeology, made his fortune as a business man and then devoted it to the increase of knowledge. Not long ago a young millionaire was ordained to the Christian ministry; it was not a question of money, but of service. There are college faculties in which rich men and poor men work side by side in the great cause of education. “I have n’t time to make money,” said the noble-minded Agassiz.

We can well afford to lose what lies below us in the zone of marketable things if we may thereby obtain what lies above us in the zone of noble things. “Why should I do anything for those people?” said a rich man to an agent of the charities; “they have never done anything for me.” “True,” replied the agent, “they have never done anything for you; but if you do something for them, it will make you more like God. It is for you to decide whether that will be worth your while. What God does He does for nothing.” And so it is always a question of becoming like God, of sharing His life of disinterested service, of entering into fellowship with Him. Self-sacrifice is the great word which Christianity gave the world; but self-sacrifice does not mean self-effacement;

it means, rather, self-enlargement, a losing of one's self in one's work, in one's duty, in the life of God—a surrender of the smaller for the larger self. And in that you find the reward for disinterested service—a reward that money cannot buy.

And now as to glory. Appreciation, recognition, praise, popularity, notoriety, fame—all this is pleasant, none of it is necessary; the greater minds think little about it. But some persons can no more work without praise than an opium-eater can live without his drug, or an inebriate without his dram. Even St. Simeon Stylites, as portrayed by Tennyson, could not get along without the admiration of men; he was one of those persons whose pride happens to take the form of humility,—a humility that has no value to them as a private possession, but only as a public spectacle. This kind of self-consciousness is one of the subtlest forms that selfishness can assume. The love of glory is a multifarious and omniverous beast; it takes on whatever form will best enable it to overcome the victim it pursues, whether that victim be the ruler of an empire or an occupant of the poets' corner in some country weekly. It captures some persons only in part; others it devours, as it did Napoleon, body and soul. Not infrequently it triumphs where the love of money utterly fails. A man will give a fortune to endow a college provided the college may bear his name; or he will toil unremittingly for others provided his good deeds are

blazoned before the world; or he will even face danger and death if only he can be enrolled among the heroes or martyrs of the land. The test question is whether you would be willing to sacrifice in a good cause if you felt sure the sacrifice would never be known. Enoch Arden, in Tennyson's poem, reveals the greatness of his character by the way he answers that question.

The trouble with Benedict Arnold was that he could not meet a test of this kind. He had labored and suffered for his country with the utmost willingness, but when he felt that his work was not appreciated he gave it up in disgust and became a traitor. He valued the recognition of the good he had done more than he valued the good itself. Unlike Washington, he had never lost himself in the great cause, and his vanity got the better of his patriotism. But the test has difficulties even for true patriots. At the close of our recent war with Spain, there rose a controversy of great bitterness between the friends of two officers of the navy. The question at issue was the right apportionment of glory for the victory at Santiago. It would have been nobler if both the admirals had said, "I care not who gets the glory if only my country got the service."

To strive after glory is to strive after the shadow and let the substance go. It is said that in all of Wellington's dispatches you never meet with the word "glory;" it is always "duty." In Napoleon's you never meet with the word "duty;" it is always "glory." Waterloo was a clash be-

tween duty and glory, and duty won, as in the end it always must.

The desire to become conspicuous, to be pointed out, to stand among the few, has led men at times to stop at nothing. Notoriety was the sole motive of Herostratus in destroying by fire the great temple of Diana. He preferred anything to oblivion—even contempt. The man who is talked against and persecuted for what he thinks and does in obedience to his conscience, and who nevertheless holds bravely on his way, is generally cited as the noblest embodiment of heroic conduct. But there is something which requires a greater courage, sometimes, and a finer quality of heroism in the soul, and that is the willingness to belong to the many, to be lost sight of, to work on in a quiet and unobtrusive way without recognition, or the expectation of it, from any source. The names of our noblest heroes and heroines are not written in the records of this world. Such is the significance of Sill's poem entitled "Dare You?"

*"Doubting Thomas and loving John,
Behind the others walking on:—*

*"Tell me now, John, dare you be
One of the minority?
To be lonely in your thought,
Never visited nor sought,
Shunned with secret shrug, to go
Through the world esteemed its foe;
To be singled out and hissed,
Pointed at as one unblessed,*

*Warred against in whispers faint,
 Lest the children catch a taint;
 To bear off your titles well, —
 Heretic and infidel?
 If you dare, come now with me,
 Fearless, confident and free.*

“*Thomas, do you dare to be
 Of the great majority?
 To be only as the rest,
 With Heaven’s common comforts blessed;
 To accept, in humble part,
 Truth that shines on every heart;
 Never to be set on high,
 Where the envious curses fly;
 Never name or fame to find,
 Still outstripped in soul and mind;
 To be hid, unless to God,
 As one grass-blade in the sod,
 Underfoot with millions trod?
 If you dare, come with us, be
 Lost in love’s great unity.*”

Self-consciousness obtrudes itself into what we do every day of our lives. But when we think of the impression we are making instead of the service we are rendering, we never quite lose ourselves in our work. This is a form of vanity, though we seldom recognize it as such and would feel horrified to be classed with vain persons. M. Perrichon, in the little French play, wanted a picture of Mont Blanc. The artist painted the mountain in the background and M. Perrichon in the foreground, so that the man quite overshadowed the mountain. But M. Perrichon was

greatly pleased; and we all are pleased — foolish people that we are! — when we can centre attention on ourselves instead of on something greater than ourselves.

There is an old mediaeval story which was published many years ago in a book of poems called "Monastic Legends." It tells how seven holy men resolved to dedicate their lives to God's service. They took for their chapel a lonely glade of the forest. But they had one grief: they were old and not able to sing well. Their abbot, therefore, gave them leave to say their chants and hymns instead of singing them. God would accept their service, the abbot said, if they did as well as they could. But one of their hymns, the *Magnificat*, the abbot positively excepted; this they must try to chant.

*"So every day, at vesper time, Magnificat was heard;
'Tis said that from the boughs above it frightened every
bird.*

*For all were out of tune, and each a different chant did
try;*

*But up in heaven, where hearts are known, it made
sweet melody."*

They kept this up, day after day, until one Christmas Eve there came among them a young stranger with a most beautiful voice. The old monks were charmed with his singing, and they got him to sing for them the famous chant.

*"And each one in his heart exclaimed, 'Thank God that on
this night*

*One is among us who can sing Magnificat aright.
 But had they marked the stranger's face and seen how
 all his thought
 Was on his own melodious voice—how self was all he
 sought—
 They would have known that up in heaven that voice
 was never heard;
 For, though the birds came flying back, Christ could not
 hear a word."*

At the close of the service an angel appeared and demanded why no praise had been offered "on that night so blest." This opened the eyes of the monks; they were alarmed, and sent the "melodious stranger" away.

*"Then, bursting forth into the chant it was their wont to
 sing,
 High up in heaven their hymn of praise with fervent
 heart they fling,
 And the angel bare it on with him to heaven's Lord and
 King."*

When people came out of church after listening to a certain noted preacher, they used to say to one another, "What a fine discourse!" but after hearing Beecher the remark was, "How true that is!" The greater the preacher the more he withdraws from sight in order that his truth may occupy the field of view. Many an oration, rich in ideas, finished in style, splendid in rhetoric, but filled with the self-consciousness of the orator, has been listened to and forgotten; but the brief Gettysburg address of Abraham Lincoln, written in pencil on the cars and given with no

thought of anything but the truth it contained, has passed into the living memory of men.

In speaking of Lincoln—and how often we find ourselves turning to the life of that great man for examples of moral power—we are reminded of one of the noblest instances of self-forgetfulness the world has ever seen. Just before his second election he had reason to believe that he might be defeated at the polls and obliged to yield his office to another man. This would not only mean ingratitude and injustice to himself on the part of his countrymen, but, as the war was still in progress, would involve grave danger to the country itself. Many a man, under such circumstances, would have felt like taking a secret delight in the evils that would follow his own defeat. Not so Abraham Lincoln. Be it said to his immortal honor that he took deliberate steps to make everything easy for his successor; he prepared to coöperate with him and contribute to the success of the new administration. Think what that meant. The more the new administration succeeded, the more it would look as if Lincoln's had been a failure; and Lincoln, knowing all that, was nevertheless willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of the land he loved.

It is difficult to speak of disinterestedness in service without recalling one more name, that of the man of old who came out of the wilderness preaching righteousness to the world. Though immense throngs flocked to hear John the Baptist, and everybody talked of his power, they

found him the most humble and most self-forgetful of men. He called himself a voice, that is, a sound, a ripple of air, that vibrates a moment and then dies into utter silence. When Another came who could do the work better, he directed his own disciples to that Other, and was willing to step aside and be forgotten. He showed no tinge of jealousy; he had no desire for glory; his unselfish aim was the prosperity of the work of God. "With what sublime repression of himself" he turned all eyes to the Son of Man, saying, "He must increase; I must decrease." Just before dawn the morning star hangs large and beautiful in the eastern sky; then it begins to fade. At last it is gone—sunk so quietly away that you would never know it had been there. The sun fills all the world. It was so with John, the herald of the kingdom; he was not the sun; he was not that light; he was sent to bear witness of the light. His work over, he passed out of view, losing his life in the larger life. And that is why Jesus could say that there had not risen a greater than John the Baptist.

There are perhaps a dozen names in history to which custom has attached the word "Great." Touch that word with your finger and it crumbles into dust. The men who bear it, most of them at least, were self-seeking men, thinking and caring chiefly for themselves. Frederick the Great did not care so much for Christianity or for Germany as he cared for Frederick; he wanted to be the centre of things. Napoleon the Great was

always talking about his star and his destiny ; he wanted to be the centre of things. These men never learned that greatness—the greatness that stands the wear and tear of time—lies not in self-assertion, but in self-surrender to what is greater than ourselves.

One of the paintings oftenest met with in European galleries is that of Napoleon arrayed in his imperial robes, with a sceptre in his hand and a crown of leaves on his head. Place beside it in imagination the portrait of a man clothed in raiment of camel's hair, with a leathern girdle about his loins. The man from the wilderness seems to suffer from comparison with the man of power and pomp. But if we look a moment longer, if we view the portraits while the light of history falls upon them and while the final standard of all judgment is applied, we notice a change. It is in their lives and their motives that the two men stand contrasted now. The sole object of one was self-aggrandizement ; he would build a world empire and found a dynasty ; to that end he left no stone unturned, sacrificing everything—family ties, the lives of his fellow men, even conscience itself. And of all that he strove for, and at one time thought he had almost achieved, absolutely nothing remains ; the robe and the sceptre and the crown in the picture drop away ; we see only the character of the man. "He that seeketh his life shall lose it." The object of the other man was not self, but service ; he gave even his life for the kingdom of righteousness ; and

the cause for which he stood, the cause with which he will always be identified, has remained and increased and been established on enduring foundations. His portrait becomes transfigured before us, and we remember those other words, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

It is a great thing to be able to sink yourself out of sight in the service you render, in the good you do, in the truth you speak. When a person does that, he shares in a life that is as large as all service, and all good, and all truth. Because he seeks no reward, the reward is always with him. The reward of a good life is the good life itself. All it asks is that it may continue to be the good life. It needs no other glory.

The life of earnest and disinterested service, that finds its joy in its work, is what Tennyson describes in some memorable lines as independent of perishable human praise; he sums up, indeed, in the one word "Virtue" what we have been calling the life that counts:

*"Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid with a breath flying by to be lost on an endless sea;
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—
Nay, but she aimed not at glory, no lover of glory she:
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be."*

THE END

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